

Death of an heroic reporter

Section Two, cover story



Something nasty in the rose garden

Page 5

summer of sport

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FRIDAY 28 JUNE 1996

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A day in the death of the Commons

John Major this week

'It is hard to find another country today whose Parliament is so central to its national life ... Parliament is where things happen. It is the voice of the people of Britain'

...the House today

Just 16 MPs were there for a debate; the chamber was bypassed, the front benches were mostly absent; an 11-week holiday was announced; Mr Major's words were derided

By Anthony Bevin

Within a day of John Major defending the existing constitution, declaring Parliament supreme, central to national life, and the place where things happen, an investigation by the *Independent* shows that the House of Commons is being increasingly shunted into the sidelines.

But that is not expected to stop MPs acting decisively on a report from the Senior Salaries Review Body, sent to the Prime Minister yesterday, with a reported recommendation of a pay rise of between 15 and 30 per cent for MPs, who are on salaries of £34,085 a year.

Mr Major will spend the next week taking soundings on the report and will give his verdict to the House next Thursday, in a written answer that is not open to questioning.

Not that there will be many MPs around to question it; for an ill-attended House will by that stage be debating "motions on the structural and boundary changes", orders for the restructuring of local government in England.

Yesterday, with the Prime Minister and the Chancellor absent at the G7 economic summit in France, and only two members of the shadow cabinet in the chamber, Prime Minister's Question Time was reduced to a sham: a curtain-raiser to announcing an 11-week summer break starting on 25 July.

Jack Straw, the shadow Home Secretary, said last night: "The Chamber reacts to the way Ministers treat it, and the longer in power, the more arrogant Ministers have become in their treatment of the Chamber."

"There is now a vulgarity in debate that was certainly not there when I was first elected in 1979. Before, relations were combative, but governments of both parties were willing to listen to the other side. Not now: it treats the voters with contempt."

In his defence of the constitutional primacy of Parliament on Wednesday night, Mr Major said Parliament was supreme. "That has to be a sick joke," one Labour frontbencher said. MPs treated the claim with incredulity. Mr Major said he was not arguing for the status quo, citing the new departmental select committee system, and new procedures for scrutinising European legislation, as examples of proper, evolutionary reform.

Mr Major appears to have forgotten a report from the all-party European Legislation Select Committee, last July, which complained that too many European directives and regulations were being passed unseen - they were arriving after they had been enacted by ministerial councils in Brussels, or late and untranslated.

Their report said: "The process of legislation in a democratic society always contains elements of proposal, consideration, amendment if necessary, and approval."

This process works only if what is proposed is clear, if it is widely available, if there is publicity and public consultation, and if there is time to consider the proposal before

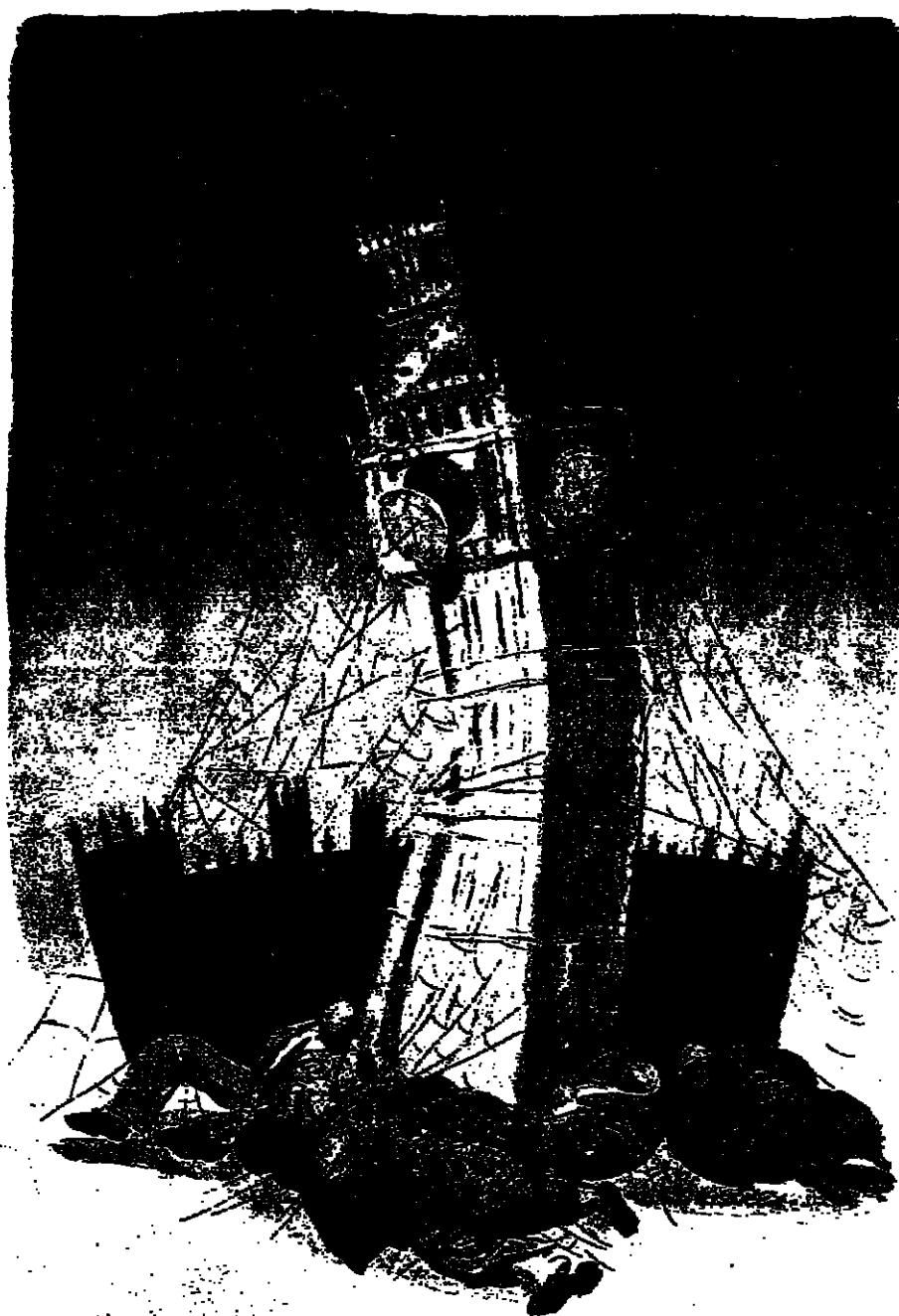
decisions are taken. European law accounts for a large and growing proportion of the law of each Member State, yet it increasingly seems to be made in a private club.

A similar cry of frustration was recently delivered to the nation by the Commons Procedure Committee, which complained about the increasing number of regulations being pushed through Parliament without debate, under the so-called negative procedure. The report said: "The numbers of instruments subject to negative procedure has almost doubled, from around 700 in the early 1980s, to over 1,300 in 1994-95. This trend may well continue as a result of the extent to which recent legislation has delegated powers to Ministers."

For those who believe such matters of arcane interest, the Labour frontbencher Jeff Rooker yesterday cited the example of a piece of delegated legislation that recently cut pensioners' reduced earnings allowance from £30 to £8 a week.

Liz Lyons, a Liberal Democrat spokeswoman, said some of her Rochdale constituents had received a leaflet "about the new law affecting Disability Living Allowance", which said that the law would be changing from the end of next month.

The matter has not yet been debated by the House. One former Conservative Minister said last night that the select committees were important because they gave MPs an alternative power-base to the Chamber. "If you want to keep a secret, then make a speech in the Chamber," he said.



Attendance in the House has become so poor that there were only two members of the shadow Cabinet in the Chamber when the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, stood in for Mr Major yesterday. There were 215 out of 650 MPs present in the Chamber for Prime Minister's questions on Thursday 9 March. Yesterday,

there were 185. One Cabinet source responded strongly yesterday to a suggestion that the business of the House for next week did not, perhaps, merit a marked pay increase. He said that was "codswallop", citing a two-day debate on the remaining stages of the Broadcasting Bill on Monday and Tuesday. There are also strong cross-

party complaints that the media could be to blame for the demise of the Chamber, with broadsheet newspapers cutting back coverage. But one Labour MP told the *Independent*: "I haven't been into the Chamber for a fortnight. It has got no power and does not relate to anything I do. It is an empty, decaying waffle shop."

Sketching out a pointless day of bickering



DAVID AARONOVITCH

OK, so I was fed up. Defeat at the hands of that *wunderbar* folk, the Germans, a postal strike and a tube stoppage provided reason enough to feel fairly savage. Two hours in the House nevertheless contrived to make me feel even worse. The fatuity - the monotonous pointlessness - of so much that is said and done in the Chamber of the House of Commons at the moment was exemplified by two events that are theoretically immensely important in ensuring the accountability of the Government to Parliament.

The first was Treasury questions. Yesterday Mr Clarke was not there - he is in Lyons. So Mr Brown was not there - he was in Scotland. It would clearly be infra dig for him to have to face a junior minister.

What I witnessed was 45 minutes of repetitive, charmless and utterly unenlightening point scoring. This - from James Pawsey (Rugby) - could stand for virtually every single question asked from the Tory benches. "Would the minister [William Waldegrave] agree with me that a low inflation rate and low interest rates are a prerequisite for a successful economy, that ours in this country are very low, but would he care to say what would happen if the policies of the parties opposite were implemented?" When repeated a dozen times over, such Pawsyism completely subverts the value of question time.

Shamefully, however, ministers connive in this subversion. When - by accident - a proper question was actually asked, the ministers dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to the business of not answering it. Andrew Smith, the shadow chief secretary, asked a question about a mistake in the estimate for the

Government's borrowing requirement. Mr Waldegrave did not refer once to the subject of the question, contenting himself with an attack on the Labour government of 1976-79. So often, in fact, did he and his trio of ministerial sidekicks repeat this mantra that it became literally maddening - a form of political white noise. I challenge Mr Waldegrave to write to the paper and tell readers what benefit accrued to the country from his activities between 2.30pm and 3.15pm yesterday.

At Prime Minister's Question Time there was no Prime Minister. He, too, was in Lyons. So there was no Blair; he was in his office. Unfortunately, Mr Prescott was mounting Mr Panderou in Athens. And regrettably, the shadow leader of the House, Anne Taylor was in Dewsbury "on constituency business". Which left the admirable Jeff Rooker - not even a member of the shadow cabinet - to face Hezza.

The result was entirely predictable. In his Brummie soprano Mr Rooker asked a long question about the privatisation of defence housing and Mr Heseltine answered. During Mr Rooker's follow-up the following exchange took place between a Conservative and a Labourite. "Get on with it!" shouted the Tory. "Shut up you!" the Labour man yelled back. Hear, bloody hear.

Greer on Gazza: In his lumpy shorts, the idiot savant who won us all over

By Germaine Greer

Every woman in Europe should have watched *Euro 96*, watched it and wept, not because Germany keeps beating better-looking teams, but because the phenomenon illustrates just what women are up against when they try to mitigate the maleness of the world.

For hour after hour, males all over the country trembled, roared, shouted and stamped their unforced devotion to the god of football; for every man actually at Wembley, there were several hundred in front of television sets replicating his every yell and groan.

In the stadium 70,000 voices were lifted in staggering unison, following no beat but the drumming in their ears. These were men of all kinds, from suits and anoraks to naked savages, bald, shaggy, clipped or moustachioed, purple-faced with frustration or white with tension, tight-lipped and silent, frantic and verbal. The collective energy that they generated burst upon the female viewer like a high-pressure storm system. Any-one who stood there shouting "It's only a game" would have been inviting a thunderbolt.

There were women at Wembley, sniffing the testosterone-laden air with relish, but, though they were at the event, they were not of it. The male force field lapped briefly round them and surged on towards whatever shared agony or ecstasy lay in store.

When England lost the women wept for the men, not for themselves. The men's feelings were the opposite of com-



Paul Gascoigne: Genius whose art is central to our culture, Germaine Greer believes



passion, dwelling in a region of the psyche beyond conscience or consciousness. The Germans could say kindly that the luckiest rather than the best team won, but it didn't ease the abomination of the desolation that fell upon every man who saw his team lose. In the morning po-faced television presenters deployed the scenes of shame, the smashed windows, the burnt police cars.

A tidy policeman said: "This has nothing to do with football." Even he did not want people to get the idea that football is bad for civilisation. I begin to think that football is the necessary antidote to civilisation.

I watched *Euro 96* the way some people view Victoria Falls,

stricken with awe. Even more than being fascinated by the massive display of animal power in the stands, I was astonished by the strange nobility of the spectacle. The England team was a team as few national sides have ever been; they threw themselves at the implacable Germans as if no man had ever broken a leg on a football field. The instinct for self-preservation was in abeyance, overridden by something more basic and utterly mysterious. The continuous sonic boom from the fans' throats seemed to reflate tired muscles like a gas. The players ran for hours on end, driving rubbery legs as if they had been steel pistons. On a pitch as hard and hot as flint, they ran and

ran, slid and crashed and fell, and got up and ran and crashed and slid some more.

Chief among them and everywhere was Paul Gascoigne, a player I had heard much of, but never seen. I had been informed that he was a liability, past it, should have been dropped; terribly unfit he was they said. Sports writers made him out to be a kind of elderly brat, emotionally unstable, a prima donna with dodgy tendons and brittle bones. The tabloids bitched him for ignoring the responsibilities as a father and decided without evidence he was the one who smashed up the jet bringing the team home from Hong Kong.

What I saw was a barrel-

chested man with unusually long legs and a high-stepping run, and I saw him everywhere, following the ball with the unflinching enthusiasm of a puppy. He flung himself legs first into the most unpromising situations, scissored the ball out from under, and pivoted and swivelled his big body around impossible angles, to play the ball as neatly as a dart.

When he got stepped on or copped an elbow in the throat, or clanged his temple against a German head, he would open his mouth in a soundless howl before making sure by a shrug or a smile to turn away any wrath caused by his own recklessness. His big chest seemed to hang in the air as his toes probed for the ball, which is odd enough without the extraordinary, the un-English openness of his face. No wonder the Italians adored him, and equally no wonder the English gutter press hates him. I saw George Best play at his best; I have seen Gascoigne play past his best and I think him still the better man, because of the evident generosity of his spirit and his wholesale identification with the team before himself.

In his lumpy long shorts and up-and-down socks he seemed more like a boy than a man, the just William of the side. In a team full of hard men, he was the lad, the Beniamino as Italians say. He may be an idiot, and a dire disappointment to all the women rash enough to imagine that they can domesticate him, but he is an idiot savant. His genius is for football, and football is an art more central to our culture than anything the Arts Council deigns to recognise.

QUICKLY

Unfit youth
The last 15 years have seen an unprecedented decline in the provision of sports in schools - and subsequent levels of fitness in young people. Page 3

Poor part-timers
The pay of middle class women is catching up fast with their male colleagues, but the poorer females in part-time work are faring much worse. Page 5

World Cup hopes
A £160m scheme to build a new 83,000-seat Wembley stadium could spearhead a British bid to host the World Cup in 2006, its backers claimed yesterday. Page 9

Beautiful obsession
The result of the *Independent's* Spanish competition - to write a haiku on the theme of Spain - is revealed. Page 8

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news



Veronica Guerin courageous

Veronica Guerin's crusade goes on

Tony Felloni was the heroin dealer from hell. A convicted pimp who procured young girls and forced them into prostitution, he battered them when they tried to escape. He supplemented his drug dealing with burglary, robbery and constant violence. His

wife, the mother of his seven children, is scarred for life by beatings and bite marks. He hacked her with a hatchet and threw her through a window. Even his own children were not safe from his evil – two of them are likely to die from

Aids contracted from dirty needles after he introduced them to heroin. Four of the others are hooked, in jail or on bail because of the drug. There was nothing he would not do for money. Two drug addicts were poisoned with strychnine Felloni stole from

a chemist's shop, thinking it was heroin. Today the *Independent* reproduces murdered Dublin journalist Veronica Guerin's last published article – an exposé of Felloni who was jailed this month for 20 years. Ms Guerin was not

killed because of the revelations in this story – one of many similar exposes over the years. She was killed to extinguish the searching light she brought to bear on Dublin's lowlife throughout her career. *Guerin's quest, Section Two*

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

The first man convicted in a private prosecution for rape, by an English court, had his 14-year jail sentence cut to 11 years by the Court of Appeal yesterday. Christopher Davies, 46, a chef from Margate, Kent, was taken to court by two prostitutes after the Crown Prosecution Service decided not to proceed against him because of insufficient evidence. He was convicted at Maidstone Crown Court in May last year. Passing sentence, Judge Anthony Balton said prostitutes had as much right to say "no" as any other women. Today, three appeal judges agreed, but said the sentence on Davies was "somewhat higher than it should have been".

The prostitutes told how, on separate occasions, they were forced into degrading sexual acts at Davies's flat. One was tied by her hands to the head of his bed and told to smile as Davies took Polaroid photographs which, he told her, were his "insurance" if she went to the police. The women's solicitor, Kevin Jones, said: "This judgment demonstrates that the women were right to pursue their own prosecution and that the Crown Prosecution Service were wrong to have discontinued the case."

Sexual and racial harassment and bullying are rife among the staff of a police force, according to an internal report. A study by the Police Federation and trade unions found one in eight women in South Yorkshire police had suffered some form of harassment by male colleagues.

The eight-month inquiry, which followed concerns raised in a damning report by an inspector last year, concluded routine intimidation and bullying were a "large blot on the copy book" of the force. Almost half the 300 staff chosen at random for interview believed they had been treated unfairly during their time on the force – a figure rising to more than 58 per cent among black and Asian employees. "Virtually all female respondents who had ever had a CID attachment reported behaviour by some male colleagues as a range from intimidatory or harassing at worst to unwelcome at best," the report said. The study concluded, however, that the situation was improving.

Prisoners are being allowed intimate sessions with loved ones in a jail visiting room in front of families and children, it emerged yesterday. Members of the board of visitors told independent inspectors they were disturbed at the level of "overt sexual behaviour" in the visiting room at Maidstone Prison in Kent, where staff were said in a report to be reluctant to interfere.

Inside the prison, cells were found to contain sexually explicit pictures – even in the wing containing convicted sex offenders. Harry Fletcher, assistant general secretary of the National Association of Probation Officers, said the problems were typical of many jails: "There are insufficient staff to supervise visits and prisoners with desperate needs will resort to desperate measures to fulfil them," he said. The inspectors blamed budget cuts and low staffing levels for a series of potential problems in discipline, and called for immediate moves to enforce better standards of behaviour in the visiting room.

The Government's Asylum Bill has been denounced by the Board of Deputies of British Jews as "a harsh and retrograde measure which will bring untold misery to thousands of vulnerable and disadvantaged people," according to this week's *Jewish Chronicle*. The attack on the Bill came in a speech from the chief executive of the Board of Deputies, Neville Nagler, a former Home Office official. Mr Nagler said that Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, who is himself Jewish, had been unresponsive "to the very real concerns voiced by religious, welfare and legal rights groups". He added: "Families have been turning up at the Refugee Council homeless and starving," and added that if the Bill had been in force a century ago, most of the ancestors of British Jewry would have been returned to their homelands in eastern and central Europe. *Andrew Brown*

A £35,000 pay-off for a director of the National Heritage Memorial Fund, who was fired for awarding computer contracts to a firm run by her social partner, was sharply criticised by an all-party committee of MPs. The Public Accounts Committee said they were concerned that the "somewhat generous" size of the settlement and the delay in suspending Georgina Naylor did not give a clear enough signal to others as to the seriousness of a breach of the fundamental duty of an accounting officer. They urged the Treasury to issue new guidance. The MPs said it was "unacceptable" that Ms Naylor, who was dismissed last year, should have allowed a "clear conflict of interest" to arise by permitting her partner's firm, Simmo Software Services, to tender for a fund contract. In total Simmo was awarded work worth £35,000. *Stephen Goodwin*

A feared increase in abortions after last October's contraceptive pill scare has so far failed to materialise. Figures released by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) yesterday showed abortions in the three months from 1 October fell by 8.75, a drop of 2.2 per cent on the same months previous year. Abortions in December – the month when the scare was at its height – were down by 10.5 per cent on the same month last year. Some impact on the figures for the first quarter of this year cannot be ruled out, but ONS said there was "no evidence of an increase" at the end of last year. *Nicholas Thompson*

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ALAN MURDOCH

Dublin

The Irish government is to launch a crackdown on organised crime as a wave of public outrage grows over the murder of Dublin crime reporter Veronica Guerin.

The Dail is to be recalled for a special summer sitting next month to consider emergency legislation to target crime earnings and criminal assets, and possibly tighten up bail regulations.

Ms Guerin, who was renowned for her investigations into some of Ireland's leading criminals, was shot dead at the wheel of her car by two gunmen on a motorbike when she pulled up at traffic lights on a main road into Dublin on Wednesday.

The murder – which police

believe was ordered by an ecstasy manufacturer in west Dublin – has provoked an outcry. A mass of floral wreaths and tributes were laid outside the Irish parliament at Leinster House. One inscription read bluntly: "Who do we vote for to do something about this?"

Irish politicians are facing bit-

ter public criticism over what is widely seen as a complacent attitude towards loopholes in the law and towards Garda resources that have enabled drug dealers to escape imprisonment.

A government spokesman said the new measures to target earnings and assets from crime

will be put to the special Dail sitting on 25 July.

The aim is to provide wider grounds for prosecutions of those involved in organised crime and drugs, drawing on joint initiatives from the Irish tax authorities, the Revenue Commissioners and the Departments of Finance, Justice and

Social Welfare. A government committee will report on possible measures a week before the Dail's special sitting.

Until now tax laws have not been used against major crime figures. The Revenue Commissioners last night confirmed no one has ever been jailed in the history of the Irish state for

tax fraud, apart from a Cork man given a three-day sentence for not paying a fine.

Tightening Ireland's liberal bail laws, which have been blamed for preventing the re-mandating in custody of major drug dealers awaiting trial, may require a constitutional referendum.

One senior source argued that it was "more important to get it right than get it done quickly". He added that "none of the government parties believe that the present situation is satisfactory".

Ms Guerin's colleagues on the *Sunday Independent* yesterday called on all Irish journalists to observe a minute's silence in her memory at 1pm next Monday 1 July "as a signal to those who murdered her to say we are not going to be intimidated".

A declaration from British and Irish editors

Veronica Guerin was murdered for being a journalist. She was a brave and brilliant reporter who was gunned down for being too tenacious in her investigations of organised crime in Ireland.

We view this assassination as a fundamental attack on the free press which is essential to the democratic process. Jour-

nalists will not be intimidated. We hereby commit our news organisations to continue the investigation of the stories which cost Veronica Guerin her life.

Conor Brady, editor, *Irish Times*; Peter Murtagh, editor, *Sunday Tribune*; Charles Moore, editor, *Daily Telegraph*; Andrew Marr, editor, the *In-*

dependent; Peter Wilby, editor, *Independent on Sunday*; Paul Dacre, editor, *Daily Mail*; Alan Rusbridger, editor, the *Guardian*; Peter Stothard, editor, the *Times*; Will Hutton, editor, the *Observer*; John Witherow, editor, *Sunday Times*; Tom Collins, editor, the *Irish News*; Aengus Flanagan, editor, the *Sunday Independent*;

Vincent Doyle, editor, the *Irish Independent*; Gerry O'Regan, editor, the *Star*; Brian Looney, editor, the *Examiner*; Damien Kibard, editor, the *Sunday Business Post*; Colm McGinly, editor, the *Sunday World*; Martin Lindsay, editor, *Sunday Life*; Joe Mulholland, director of news, RTE; Geoff Martin, editor, *News Letter*, Belfast.

Blair to defend U-turn on devolution

JOHN RENTOUL

Political Correspondent

Tony Blair, the Labour leader, will today challenge critics of his U-turn over referendums on Scottish and Welsh devolution to engage in "reasonable debate" rather than charges of betrayal.

In a speech in Edinburgh and a string of interviews, Mr Blair brushes aside a furious backlash in the Scottish Labour Party, which yesterday saw Lord Ewing, a former Labour minister, resign as joint chairman of the cross-party Scottish Constitutional Convention.

He will dismiss charges of betrayal as "utter nonsense" and urge his Edinburgh audience to ask whether a referendum is sensible or not. Harold Wilson and James Callaghan tried to set up a Scottish parliament and a Welsh assembly, but failed. "If we win the election, I want to be the prime minister who does it," he will say.

Mr Blair will accuse the Scottish press of being "out of touch" with their readers. "What the media does not address is whether it is a good idea or not – they are stuck in the U-turn time warp," said a spokesman for Mr Blair.

John McAllion, a frontbench spokesman on Scottish issues, is expected to resign today. "I'm absolutely furious at the change that has been announced. It's a disgrace," he said. He described the decision as an "insult" to the Constitutional Convention, in which Labour and Liberal Democrat politicians, Church leaders, trade unionists and others have for several years been laying plans for a Scottish parliament.

However, at a meeting of Scottish Labour MPs last night, only three MPs, Irene Adams, Willie McKelvey and Dennis Canavan, attacked the propos-

Labour's plans

- Referendums in Scotland and Wales in first six months of a Labour Government.
- Both will ask if people support Labour's plans for assemblies.
- If approved, a Scottish parliament and Welsh assembly will be legislated for in the first year.
- In Scotland people will also be asked if they support the Scottish parliament having the power to vary the standard rate of income tax by 3p in the pound, up or down.
- A Welsh assembly should be elected by a system that has "an element of proportionality", rather than the first-past-the-post system preferred by the Welsh Labour Party in the past.

al while 19 MPs spoke in favour. They were yesterday joined by another left-wing dissident with nationalist tendencies, George Galloway, who described the plan as a "blunder" which will "split the Labour Party and our allies in Scotland right down the middle".

It emerged yesterday that the decision was only taken last week by Mr Blair, the three senior Scots in the shadow Cabinet, Gordon Brown, Robin Cook and George Robertson, and by Ron Davies, the Welsh spokesman. Labour officials said the proposal for a referendum had arisen in discussions between Mr Blair and Mr Robertson, the Scottish affairs spokesman, in March.

Scottish Labour MPs yesterday predicted that a Labour government would secure a 70-80-per-cent "Yes" vote on the question of a Scottish parliament, but that the vote on its tax-raising powers would be "very tight".



Going nowhere: Tube trains in London stand idle during Aslef's strike yesterday

Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

More postal strikes could cost the Royal Mail its monopoly

BARRIE CLEMENT

Labour Editor

The Government may be forced to suspend the Royal Mail's monopoly on a permanent basis if industrial action continues, according to senior Whitehall sources.

As 134,000 postal workers began their second 24-hour stoppage at noon yesterday, Government sources warned that the Cabinet could be under considerable pressure to allow private companies to continue to provide a mail service after the present dispute was over.

Pressure on ministers will come from the companies themselves, but also from backbench MPs, the source said. It is also thought Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, may add to the clamour because of his enthusiasm for

privatisation. The sources stressed ministers had no immediate plans to allow the private sector to handle letters for less than £1 per item – the cut-off level for the Royal Mail monopoly. There was no enthusiasm to end the monopoly, but the present system would be endangered by further action, the sources said.

The warning came as hopes rose of a settlement to the dispute over a pay and productivity package. Contrary to expectations the postal executive of the Communication Workers' Union refrained from naming a date for a third day-long strike and registered its intention to resume negotiations next Monday.

The union is also to conduct a consultation exercise among its branch representatives and decide whether to continue the dispute later next week.

The new mood among CWU leaders followed a letter from Richard Dyke, managing director of the Royal Mail, declaring that he was prepared to be flexible over demands for greater productivity. The union is particularly suspicious of management's insistence on teamworking.

It was likely that most households would not receive mail today, but the backlog should be cleared by tomorrow.

Meanwhile, millions of travellers and commuters in London had their journeys disrupted yesterday when Tube drivers staged the first of a series of day-long walkouts over working hours.

London Underground said that it was able to run about one in three of services, but the train drivers' union Aslef estimated that the figure was nearer one in four at best.

A second one-day stoppage is planned for next Wednesday.

Law Adams, leader of the union, said all his members obeyed the strike call. The trains which ran were driven by members of the rival RMT union or by non-union employees, he said.

Ann Burfitt, personnel director at London Underground, said she was pleased so many services ran and added that few travellers would sympathise with the "well-paid" strikers who earn £24,500 a year.

The Aslef executive is unlikely today to agree to a management request to take the dispute to the industry's wages board because it would mean the suspension of disruption. The Aslef leadership may favour talks under the auspices of Acas, the conciliation service.

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صكا من الامل

Sport in school: Children put off by lack of choice in lessons show a waning interest in rugby, cricket and badminton

Play up and play the game...but not too often

JOJO MOYES

Hockey sticks and cricket bats may soon be confined to the school locker-room, to be replaced on the playing fields by basketballs, rollerblades and video games, according to a new survey.

Although the vast majority of young people approve of compulsory school sport, a lack of choice in sports lessons is discouraging young people from taking exercise. Eighty per cent of pupils would be more interested in taking part if a greater choice were available, according to "And You Can Go In Good", a survey of 764 7 to 16-year-olds commissioned by Sony PlayStation.

While football and swimming are still universal favourites, basketball is now more popular than rugby, cricket and badminton. Hockey and cricket, traditional staples of the school playing field were the least popular of all.

A look at sporting heroes reveals where the players' interest lies. Half of those questioned knew who the Chicago Bulls basketball star Michael Jordan was; this rose to 80 per cent among 15 to 16-year-olds. By contrast, only a quarter recognised the name of the England cricket captain Michael Atherton, falling to 8 per cent among girls.

"The relative popularity of Michael Jordan and Michael Atherton and the popularity of their respective sports in schools demonstrates it is easier for our young people to identify with top stars of some sports than of our traditional games. This has obvious and serious implications for the levels of competence and professionalism in those sports," the survey concludes. It also reveals a widespread



Atherton: Only 1 in 4 knew he was England captain

dissatisfaction with the way sport is taught in schools and considerable differences in the choice of sports available.

Cricket was played in half of schools, (62 per cent in secondary schools) and basketball was played in 6 out of 10.

Despite the widespread popularity of swimming, pool lessons were available to only 60 per cent of pupils from DE backgrounds, compared to 80 per cent of pupils from AB backgrounds. A funky 6 per cent of schools offered rollerblading.

Recent medical evidence has suggested that school-age children are more unfit than ever before and that youth obesity is a serious problem. Yet, perhaps worryingly, 74 per cent of the sample described themselves as being very fit and only 7 per cent admitted to being unfit.

Pupils, it appears, do not appear to see video games and gym shoes as mutually exclusive. More than a third (38 per cent) thought video games were use-



Pupils at Channing Day School for Girls, north London, playing cricket, now one of the least popular school sports

Photograph: Edward Sykes

ful tools in learning basic rules and tactics of some sports.

This reinforced findings from an earlier survey by Dr Mark Griffiths, a senior lecturer in psychology at Nottingham Trent University, which found that the third of children who spent an

hour a day playing video games were also more physically active.

"There was a hard core of 5 to 7 per cent who played all the time and never did any exercise, but for the majority it was just another way to spend their leisure time," he said.

Dissatisfaction with school sports on offer was closely linked to levels of PE avoidance.

Nearly a fifth of those questioned said they "tried to find ways of avoiding physical exercise", the worst avoiders being 15 to 16-year-old girls (39 per

cent). Of the whole sample, 42 per cent were sure their fellow pupils were telling lies to avoid sports lessons.

Despite this pronounced trend towards more "fashionable" sports, the excuses used to avoid physical exercise were

reassuringly traditional. "Forgetting to bring kit" was the most commonly cited, followed by sick notes, sudden illness and fake injuries. Other methods mentioned included intentional self-injury and, in one case, good old-fashioned bribery.

The games they play

Non competitive games for schools:

Earth ball: A large inflatable ball with a globe printed on it is brought into a group. It is passed around, thrown and caught, as with normal ball games but apparently requires "interaction and co-operation" among players because of its sheer size.

Parachute games: Up to 20 pupils stand in a circle and work together to manipulate a parachute, throwing it up and bringing it down, running under it and playing "cat and mouse" with one group under it and one group outside.

Problem solving: Using benches, chairs, balls, cups of water and bean-bags, pupils have to work together to work out ways of moving items over, through and under obstacles according to set criteria.

Cricket/Rounders without winners: Usual rules apply except that everybody bats, bowls and fields and no points are scored, so there are no winners or losers.

Non-competitive sports days:

All races/events are conducted as normal, except that players are awarded points for performance. At the end of the event, players are divided into three groups of point scores, to ensure no one comes bottom.

The more exercise children take, the happier they feel

Sporty teenagers are happier than those who are less physically active, according to a study in today's *Lancet*.

The finding is based on a survey of more than 5,000 14 to 16-year-olds which revealed that those who played sport were happier regardless of sex, social class or health status.

But such is the state of school sport, that if teenagers were to rely on educational establishments for their needs, Britain would be breeding a generation of manic depressives.

That may be about to change, however. In a few weeks' time John Major will reveal part two of his blueprint for promoting school sports. It comes a year after he announced the initiative, which includes a £100m Academy of Sport, the promotion of competitive team games and a compulsory two hours of sport a week.

Major blueprint aims to reverse the trend. Jojo Moyes reports

Mr Major is not alone in his "commitment" to sport; all political parties are now stressing their gym-kitted credentials. Yet the last 15 years have seen an unprecedented decline in school provision, and levels of fitness in young people.

On average, pupils aged 14-16 now have 91 minutes of games and PE a week compared with 128 minutes eight years ago. Three-quarters have less than the two-hour minimum recommended by the Conference of Medical Royal Colleges. And surveys suggest that pupils do not care. Many claim to be bored by traditional games and are happier rollerblading or watching basketball on Channel 4.

The decline of PE can be traced back to the early 1980s, with the Government's introduction in 1982 of Circular 909

which allowed local authorities to sell school playing fields. At least 5,000 have since been sold off to developers, with a further 2,000 reportedly in the pipeline.

Another was the decision of some left-wing councils to discourage competitive sports, on the grounds that it made the less able players feel like failures. The commitment to team sport can be seen as something of a backlash against the politically correct non-competitive sports they encouraged.

The teachers' strike of the mid-Eighties transformed the position of after-school sport; when teachers were forced to accept contracts of 1,265 hours a year, many reacted by working only the stipulated hours.

And in 1988, the Education Reform Act meant that teachers had to spend evenings and

weekends keeping up with changes in the national curriculum, leaving them unable to take part in extra curricular sporting activities. For these reasons, many are sceptical of the "new commitment".

Last December, the National Association of Head Teachers said it could not support the Prime Minister's proposals because they were limited by academic and funding pressures and by staff and pupils who dislike team games.

And the children themselves have changed. The decline of school sports has corresponded with increasing encroachments on their freedom. Where 25 years ago they would walk to school, most are now ferried in cars. Fears over safety mean that they do not play in parks in their spare time, and as a result many

favour sedentary pursuits such as television or computer games.

The results are alarming. In 1990, the results of a five-year study into children's fitness at the University of Exeter found that 48 per cent of girls and 41 per cent of boys already exceeded safe cholesterol levels. It also found that 13 per cent of boys and 10 per cent of girls were overweight.

Nigel Hook, deputy general secretary of the Central Council for Physical Recreation, is all for an increased commitment to school sport. The benefits, he said, are manifold. "It's the old adage about playing together and teamwork. Meeting success and failure with equilibrium. Learning to work with their friends and team members. For all the resources you put into sport, you get the benefits back. But there's got to be sufficient resources to make it work."

The sports children like to play

BOYS		GIRLS	
Football	78%	Netball	53%
Swimming	40%	Swimming	50%
Basketball	39%	Rounders	36%
Rugby	6%	Gymnastics	29%
Athletics	33%	Athletics	28%
Cricket	28%	Tennis	23%
Rounders	27%	Football	23%
Tennis	21%	Basketball	23%
Badminton	21%	Hockey	22%
Hockey	18%	Badminton	19%
Netball	8%	Rugby	7%

32% of girls are not offered football at their school
1 in 15 8-10 year old boys are not offered football at school
Basketball is now played in 6 out of 10 schools
Roller-skating is available in 6% of schools
Cricket is played in only 50% of schools

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news

Tabloids blamed for violence after England defeat

STEVE BOGGAN and
JAMES CUSICK

England woke up with a familiar hangover yesterday after defeat in the European championships was followed by hooliganism across the nation.

In scenes that most fans had consigned to history, mobs rampaged through cities, towns and villages smashing windows, burning cars and looting shops.

There were attempts by the Prime Minister and the police

to put the actions of the few into context with those of the many. But there was a reminder, too, from Jack Straw, Labour's home affairs spokesman, of the xenophobia whipped up by some of the media before Wednesday's match against Germany.

"I hope that last night's scenes will serve to force some elements of the tabloid press to reflect upon the irresponsible attitude they showed in advance of last night's game," he said. The sentiment was echoed by the all-par-

ty National Heritage Committee, which asked the Press Complaints Commission to hold an urgent investigation into "jingoistic" tabloid coverage.

Police across the country said trouble broke out within minutes of Gareth Southgate's sudden-death penalty miss. The worst trouble flared in Trafalgar Square in London where up to 2,000 drunken yobs pelted police and passers-by with bottles. Cars were overturned and set alight and shop windows smashed as

police in riot gear fought first to contain, then to disperse the hooligans. There were more than 200 arrests, 66 people were injured and 40 vehicles and seven buildings were damaged.

"I don't think by any stretch of the imagination you could call the people who took part in those disturbances genuine football fans," said Commander John Purnell, the man in charge of policing Euro 96 in London.

In Brighton, a 17-year-old Russian was stabbed five times

by youths asked him if he was German. Police, who are treating the incident as attempted murder, said his condition was "serious but stable".

In Bedford, 300 fans rampaged through the city centre, looting shops and smashing windows. Police called in reinforcements from Cambridgeshire, Thames Valley, Hertfordshire and the Metropolitan Police area. There were 33 arrests.

A police officer suffered a head injury when he was hit by

a bottle during a disturbance involving several hundred fans in Swindon, Wiltshire, where cars were wrecked and windows smashed. Similar incidents were reported in Birmingham, Bradford, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, and Newport and Much Wenlock in Shropshire. In Shireley in the West Midlands, hooligans hurled bricks through a German-owned Aldi supermarket.

John Major condemned the violence but added: "I think we need to get it in context. They were disgraceful but they were a relatively small number of people compared to the 75,000 people in Wembley and the literally many millions of people who were watching the game on TV."

Eleven men appeared at Bow Street magistrates' court, London, yesterday on charges related to the incidents in and around Trafalgar Square. They were granted bail on condition they do not attend any football matches or go near the Charing Cross or central London area.

Disabled win right to have services restored

NICHOLAS TIMMINS
Public Policy Editor

The Government may have to legislate to allow councils to match services for the disabled to the money available after a Court of Appeal ruling yesterday which could cost social services departments hundreds of millions of pounds.

The alternatives would be much higher government spending or a relaxation in capping rules to allow local authorities to raise the council tax.

The ruling was hailed as a "wonderful victory" by disability groups and the Public Law Project which helped an 89-year-old Gloucestershire heart attack victim and the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation (Radar) to bring the landmark test case.

It means that many thousands of disabled people - more than a million, according to Radar - who have had their services cut in recent years have the right to have them restored. Stephen Cragg, the Public Law Project's solicitor, said:

"But lawyers, social services directors and Radar believe it also implies that local authorities are no longer allowed to take the cash they have available into account when setting the criteria which decide who gets the service. If that is the case, Tad Kubisa, president of the Association of Directors of Social Services, said: "It opens the floodgates. We will be looking at huge sums of money - hundreds of millions, possibly billions of pounds."

Gloucestershire, which lost the test case, is to appeal to the House of Lords. But if the ruling is upheld, then central government will have to find the cash, or capping will have to go to allow local authorities to raise it from the council tax, or the Government will have to legislate, Mr Kubisa said.

Stephen Thorpe, acting director of social services in Gloucestershire, said the ruling "in effect means that we will have to provide services even if we do not have the money to do so. This cannot be right".

Doctor reveals he is infected with HIV

GLENDIA COOPER

A doctor who has worked for six health boards since he returned from Zambia in 1993 yesterday revealed that he has been HIV-positive for three years as a result of a needle accident while treating an African patient.

Dr Sandy Logie, 57, a retired consultant physician, has written in today's *British Medical Journal* about his decision to reveal his status. Ahead of its publication, Borders Health Board yesterday called a press conference to stress that no patient has been put at risk of infection.

The board confirmed, however, that patients treated by Dr Logie, who has taken locum posts since his retirement four years ago, would have been unaware of his condition and has set up a free telephone helpline (0800 281239) to reassure them.

A spokesman for the board said: "The doctor informed the health board in the Borders as soon as he knew he was HIV positive. With their agreement he was allowed to continue working provided that he did nothing that would put any patient at risk. Telling patients

might have made them worried about getting infected and there was no cause for worry as there was absolutely no risk."

Yesterday Dr Logie said he felt guilty about not revealing that he was HIV-positive while carrying out locum work and said he had decided to go public to ease increasing strain.

In the *BMJ* article he says: "The advice of the Aids team at my local health board was that the fewer people who knew the better. Provided that I did not perform any invasive procedures there was no reason why I could not continue to practice as a physician and, perhaps controversially, there was no need to inform employing authorities of my HIV state before doing short-term consultant locum jobs."

Dr Logie, who is described by the chief medical officer of Borders Health Board as a "much loved and respected colleague", took early retirement on full pension four years ago during the government programme to reduce the number of National Health Service consultants.

He and his wife, Dorothy (who is HIV negative), decided



Going public: Dr Logie and his wife, Dorothy, in the Cheviot Hills. He felt guilty that his HIV status was not known

Photograph: Gordon Fraser

to go to Africa and one year later in Zambia he received a needle stick injury while injecting a patient. This was shortly followed by two further exposures to HIV-positive blood.

Back in Britain he was tested for HIV and the results were positive. According to official figures, the chances of having become infected were 0.3 per cent. "I guess I was just very unlucky," Dr Logie said yesterday. Dr Logie said he wrote the

letter to the *BMJ* for several reasons. "Firstly as a means of coming out and no longer trying to conceal my HIV state which has been a big strain," he said.

Second, as his health has remained good he wished to pursue permanent employment but felt that if he were to do so he would be happier "if I can be completely open about my health".

And third, "some family members and close friends have

urged me to declare my state both for my personal peace of mind and because I can then be in a position to help people less fortunate".

Dr David Goldberg, of the Scottish Centre for Infection in Glasgow, said yesterday: "There are no records anywhere in the world of patients becoming infected by contact with an HIV-positive physician or surgeon and we see no need for mandatory tests. The real risks are to

medical workers treating HIV patients in the line of duty."

In an accompanying editorial to Dr Logie's piece, the *BMJ* calls for a review of the present policy of the Department of Health, so that more influence would be given to the rights of HIV-positive workers.

It says that in some clinical disciplines "it is feasible and sensible" to advise the healthcare worker to continue to practise, which will minimise the stress

associated with the diagnosis, and that all risk procedures should be re-examined.

"A policy which supports healthcare workers is more likely to be more effective than one which excludes and in effect punishes them," the editorial says. "Any policy that could reduce the number of healthcare workers wishing to be tested will result in a pool of undiagnosed and unsupported HIV-positive healthcare workers."

Brainy sons owe their intelligence to mothers

GLENDIA COOPER

Intelligent men owe their brains to their mothers, according to research published today in *The Lancet*.

Growing evidence shows that several genes which determine intelligence appear to be located on the X chromosome, the one men inherit from their

mothers.

Any mutation on the X chromosome has more effect on a man than a woman because a woman inherits X chromosomes from both her parents, which tends to dilute the gene's impact.

But a man only has one X chromosome inherited from his mother, which is paired with the much smaller Y chromosome

from his father. Therefore, an intelligence-enhancing X gene has more of a chance of becoming the predominate gene, determining the man's basic intelligence, looks and character.

It also works the other way: if the predominate gene is not as strong as it should be, the man is more likely to suffer mental retardation.

Professor Gillian Turner, the author of the study said: "If the gene is the one that increases intelligence then its full effect will be seen in men, while in women the benefit is less pronounced. This explains why some men are extraordinarily intelligent." She concludes that if a man wants smart sons his best bet is to marry a smart woman.

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Pay gap narrows for women in professional jobs

BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

The pay of middle-class women is catching up fast with their male colleagues, but the poorest females in part-time work are faring much worse.

The hourly earnings of women in full-time jobs rose from 66 per cent of men's earnings in 1974 to 80 per cent by 1992.

While the median hourly earnings of men grew by a third between 1973 and 1993, those of full-time female workers grew by more than twice as much in proportional terms, according to Susan Harkness, of the Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics.

Although part-time workers also caught up, the gain was nowhere near as great as for women in full-time professional jobs.

In a paper, *The Gender Earnings Gap*, published in the latest issue of *Fiscal Studies*, Ms Harkness says that the gap between the highest and lowest earners has grown for both men and women. The "real

winners" have been highly paid women, who have seen their earnings almost double in real terms since 1973, she says. The losers were women in low-skilled part-time work.

The other losers were the lowest paid men who saw their pay rise by just 18 per cent over the 20 years, whereas the highest paid women enjoyed a 93 per cent increase. Big male earners saw their pay rise by 49 per cent.

Almost 21 years after the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts, however, there was still a significant pay gap.

Ms Harkness adduced two main reasons for women's lower earnings: they may not have the qualifications and "personal attributes" that can command high wages, or simply they are unable to elicit the same rewards as men for their skills.

The relative influence of the two factors has changed over the past 20 years. Ms Harkness points out that the educational attainment of women vis-à-vis men has improved markedly.

She believes the change has been the result of a combination of three factors: the effect of equal pay and sex discrimination

acts; increases in competitive pressure which discourages discrimination; and a rise in the demand for the goods and services that women typically produce.

Liz Barch, director of Opportunity 2000, said there was clear evidence that more women were occupying managerial positions. More than 30 per cent of managers among Opportunity 2000 members were women, 16 per cent of board members and 45 per cent of graduate entrants.

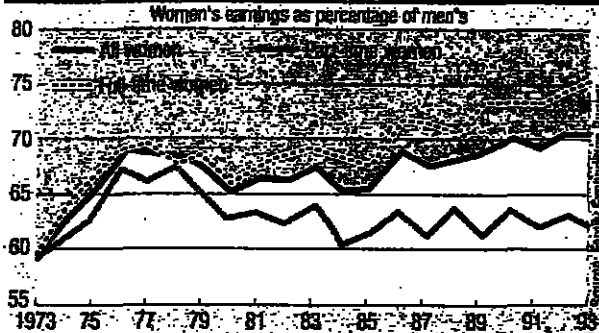
She acknowledged, however, that the majority of women were still forced to work part time because of a lack of child care.

Figures used by the union-funded Labour Research Department paint a very different picture to that presented by Ms Harkness. The LRD argues that the gap in pay has narrowed by just 7.9 per cent in 20 years, at which rate "it will take another 55 years before full equality in average earnings is reached".



Something for nothing: Conceptual artists Myles Stawman and Ella Gibbs offering tea and toast to passers-by in Stoke Newington High Street, north London, yesterday. Stawman says 'the bread is a tool to wake people up'. They pack up their teapot today. Photograph: Tony Buckingham

How gender earnings gap has narrowed



Pest killer is banned over danger to eyes

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

One of Britain's best-selling garden pesticides was banned yesterday, because tests on animals have shown it can seriously damage eyes. Sale and use of Roseclear, the country's top-selling fungicide and pesticide for roses, is now illegal. The Government and its manufacturers are urging gardeners to wrap it up and hand it in.

The product, first made and marketed by ICI and cleared for use in 1982, has sold well because it is harmless to beneficial garden insects such as bees and aphid-eating ladybirds while protecting roses and other flowers from black spot and greenfly.

But the Government's Pesticides Safety Directorate began to become concerned in April last year, after the manufacturer submitted data on skin and eye irritation tests carried out on rabbits. These showed that, undiluted, Roseclear was an extreme skin irritant. The undiluted product was also found to cause severe damage to eyes when no remedial action was taken after applying it. When used in the garden it should be diluted 300-fold with water.

This fresh information, which the manufacturer Zeneca was legally obliged to provide to the directorate, prompted further requests for information and a

review of Roseclear's approval for use by amateur gardeners.

People who have the product in their sheds and on their shelves are asked to ring a free telephone number. They will then be mailed packaging material and given the name of three nearby places where they can take their Roseclear. At the end of the year it will become illegal to even possess it. "We urge people not to put it in dustbins or down drains and sinks," a spokesman for the Ministry of Agriculture said.

Roseclear was handed to drugs and pesticides giant Zeneca when that group split off from ICI, and the marketing and distribution then moved on to Miracle Garden Products 18 months ago. Yesterday Zeneca, which still makes the ingredients, said it would take responsibility for the major recall.

About 600,000 bottles in two different sizes are sold each year, so there more than a million in sheds around the country. Roseclear is also sold in Ireland and South Africa, and those countries governments are being notified of the Ministry of Agriculture's decision.

The active ingredients, bupirimate, pirimicarb and trifluralin, are found in other Zeneca pesticides - Nimrod T and Rapid. But the ministry said there was no need to ban them.

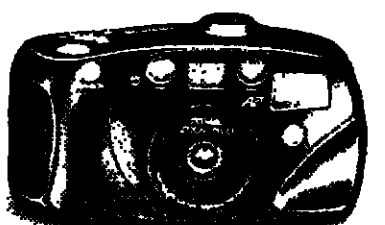
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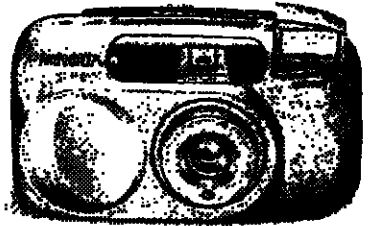
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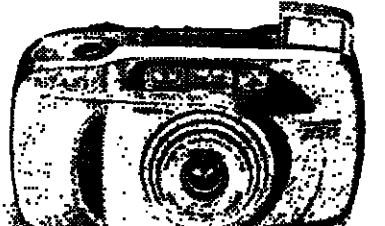
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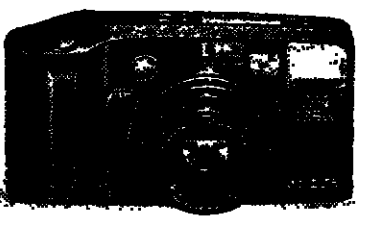
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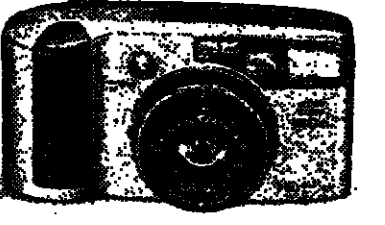
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news

Hospital smear tests blunder

GLENDA COOPER

A member of staff has been suspended from a Norfolk hospital in the wake of a warning to thousands of women that their cervical smear tests may have been wrongly interpreted.

The James Paget Hospital in Gorleston is rechecking 8,200 smear tests – some as far back as 1993. The slides have been sent for retesting.

There were first doubts about the accuracy of the screening analyst's work back as far as February but health chiefs said on Wednesday they only became certain that there was a problem in the last few days. David Ellis, the hospital's medical officer, described the analyst as someone with more than 10 years' experience "who had been performing under par".

The patients, mainly from 29 GP practices in the Yarmouth and Waveney areas, were tested from the beginning of 1993, but women tested this year are not affected. The new test results will be back by 11 July and anyone who needs further treat-

ment will be contacted by 18 July, the hospital said. A helpline (01493 452269) has set up.

Dr John Rees, director of public health at Norfolk Health Authority, said: "We know this will be extremely worrying for many women living in the area and for this reason everything is being done to re-check the slides as soon as possible. However, we want to reassure women that the risks are very low. The vast majority of smear tests are normal and while cervical cancer is a very serious disease, in the vast majority of cases it can be treated and it takes many years to develop."

In Sheffield, health chiefs have apologised to parents after 30 children were given injections of sterile water instead of a TB vaccine. Nurses carried out the routine jab on 57 children at Dore Junior School but the mistake was only discovered when a check showed that only half the vaccine had been used. The team had accidentally filled half the syringes with water, used to clean them. The injections will be done again.



Routine procedure: Speculum used in taking cervical smears for laboratory testing Photograph: Science Photo Library

BMA conference: Doctors take steps to repair their tarnished image

Sex with patients remains taboo

LIZ HUNT
Health Editor

Sexual relations between doctors and their patients is to remain a ultimate taboo after the profession overwhelmingly rejected a proposal to back less severe penalties for transgressors.

Any doctor who enters into a sexual relationship with a patient must know that he or she risks professional and public condemnation, and the possible loss of their livelihood, the British Medical Association said yesterday.

Following a week which has seen lurid headlines forecasting a "bunkers' charter" for doctors, the BMA was seeking to repair its tarnished image as members debated one of the most controversial issues to come before its annual meeting.

Dr Michael Crowe, a GP from Leicestershire, had proposed that suspension from the medical register for a doctor who has sex with a consenting adult patient was "an unacceptably severe penalty". He said that in future an official warning from the General Medical Council should be considered sufficient initially.

Dr Crowe said he was concerned about those doctors whose careers had been blighted by a sexual relationship with a consenting adult which had turned sour, and the patient – usually a woman – had sought revenge on the doctor by making a formal complaint.

"We live in a time of more tolerant social attitudes, and also one in which complaints by patients against their GPs are positively encouraged. Can the GMC always be sure that a complaint against a doctor has not been maliciously invented in convincing detail?" he asked.

But Dr Sam Everington, a GP from Tower Hamlets, in east London, told BMA representatives on the final day of their meeting in Brighton that the publicity Dr Crowe's proposal had attracted gave the impression that it was acceptable for doctors to have affairs with their patients, and that the association was condoning this.

"It challenges a basic principle of trust between a doctor and patient, a trust that is fundamental to medical practice."

We need to give the very clear message today that it is not acceptable for male and female doctors to abuse the position of power and influence they often hold over patients. And we need to give the message that we will deal with those abuses severely, both because of the damage to the profession and, far more importantly, because of the damage it does to the lives of individuals."

Dr Jeremy Lee-Potter, chairman of the GMC's professional conduct committee, said that doctors who have sex with patients are not immediately suspended from the register and that mechanisms exist for the council to exercise leniency where appropriate. But he reminded the meeting that the GMC exists for the "protection of patients, not for the protection of doctors".

Dr Brian Goff, a GP from Bungay, Suffolk, said: "The greatest good of the greatest number in our society is promoted by the existing rules which should not be altered. We must not erode the essential component of trust which allows medical practice itself to continue."

Dr Crowe's proposal, made on behalf of the Leicestershire and Rutland division of the BMA, was prompted by the experience of Dr Keith Pilsworth, a married GP from Lincolnshire, who was suspended from the register in March 1995 after having an affair with a patient. He denied professional misconduct but admitted a "gross abuse of trust".

A petition signed by 1,000 of his patients failed to stop his suspension. Dr Pilsworth was reinstated earlier this year after his 27-year-old son, also a GP who provided locum cover during his father's suspension, committed suicide. Dr Pilsworth later said the trauma of his case and suspension was a factor in his son's death.

Dr Sandy Macara, chairman of the BMA council, said much damage had been done to the profession this week by the publicity surrounding Dr Crowe's proposals, adding: "It is essential that we take this opportunity to totally refute any suggestion that we support [this] misguided motion."

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arts news

edited by David Lister

Fashion's Mr Penn goes to Bradford

LOUISE JURY

A rare exhibition of the portraiture and still lifes of influential fashion photographer Irving Penn opens today.

In a major scoop, the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television in Bradford, has been chosen as the only UK venue for the exhibition on its international tour.

Penn has been in demand for 50 years from editors and heads of fashion houses for his images of glamour and high fashion.

The American's post-war work for *Vogue* revolutionised fashion photography by dispensing with the clutter of theatrical settings and opting for plain white studios or outside sets.

The works in the exhibition, selected by 79-year-old Penn himself, are dedicated to the memory of his wife and principal model, Lisa Fonssagrives-Penn who died in December.

The subjects include the playwright Arthur Miller and the designer Yves St Laurent but also personal projects, like portraits of Moroccan nomads.

A museum spokeswoman said: "We are ecstatic. There aren't many photographers who you can genuinely describe as master photographers."

The exhibition runs until 1 September.



Revolutionary: Fashion photographer Irving Penn's work will be on show in Bradford

Photograph: Craig Easton

Poetry today: gloomy, elitist and irrelevant

DAVID LISTER

Poetry suffers from an image problem, according to the first major survey of the state of poetry by the Arts Council.

Awareness of contemporary poetry is particularly low. When asked to name poets most people say Shakespeare and Wordsworth. Women poets were seldom named, even by those who enjoyed contemporary poetry.

Most people also have a narrow definition of poetry. When told that poetry can include rap, football chants and verses in greeting cards, they become more supportive of the medium.

There is support, though, for "unobtrusive poetry": initiatives such as *Poems on the Underground*, and poetry in settings such as transport and advertising hoardings, on the Internet, and during television and radio programme intermissions.

The qualitative research involving members of the public, poets, teachers and publishers, found that poetry book titles account for 2 per cent of the total UK book market. Nearly

How movies help sales

A popular movie can sell a lot of poems. The reading of a W. H. Auden poem in *Four Weddings and a Funeral* has boosted sales of Auden's works. Auden's "Tell me the Truth About Love" sells as many as 100,000 units a year. Equally the success of the musical *Cats* has boosted T. S. Eliot's sales.

Most publishers report sales of 2,000-20,000 copies of poetry texts a year. Present day poets selling well include: Fleur Adcock, Wendy Cope, Carol Ann Duffy, Seamus Heaney, Ted Hughes, Simon Armitage, Michael Rosen and Elizabeth Jennings.

Humorous poetry and performance poetry are selling particularly well at present.

1,800 poetry titles were published in 1994, a 26 per cent rise on 1993, and a 154 per cent increase over 1975. There was a 154 per cent increase in the publication of poetry titles over the past 20 years, now worth over £15m a year.

But poetry continues to suffer from an image problem which tends to be caused by the uninspired treatment of poetry at school, which often consists of learning by rote. Most of those who had an interest in poetry said they had experienced enthusiastic teaching.

Commenting on the image of poetry, the Arts Council report says: "The public has a problem with the image of poetry. It was often perceived as out-of-touch, gloomy, irrelevant, effeminate, high brow and elitist."

"The poetry constituency's image of poetry is at odds with that of the public. The poetry world concentrates primarily, although not exclusively, on contemporary poetry and attributes the increase in poetry book sales, attendance at readings and interest in the art form, to this. In contrast, those without an interest in poetry perceived

it as consisting of old-fashioned, pre-20th century work. Amongst the general public, contemporary poetry had an even more negative image. On first reflection it was commonly perceived as inaccessible, complex and lacking rhyme and rhythm."

The report expresses considerable concern about the treatment of poetry in schools, and the way the national curriculum treats poetry. It says: "Teaching poetry as an academic subject rather than as a means of personal expression or as an art form to be appreciated and enjoyed throughout life contributes to its negative and inaccurate image."

"There were major concerns throughout the poetry world and from teachers about the national curriculum's emphasis on pre-20th century poetry. This focus served to compound the image of poetry as something of the past rather than a living, vibrant art form. Concern was also expressed by English teachers about the training they received in poetry."

Poets, meanwhile, are becoming concerned about having to act as media figures and give public readings for marketing purposes. The report notes: "They felt that some poetry was not suited to public readings and that some poets had neither the inclination nor the presentational qualities necessary to undertake such public performances. Poetry promoters, however, were keen."

The report notes that the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary defines poetry as "the expression of beautiful or elevated thought, imagination, or feeling, in appropriate language, such language containing a rhythmic element and having usually a metrical form."

The report adds: "As we move towards the end of this millennium, song lyrics, rap, greeting card verses, limericks and several other linguistic variations lay claim to the genre." ■ *A Poetry Survey for the Arts Council of England*: 14 Great Peter Street, London, SW1.

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Nostalgia: Spam, trigger for wartime memories

Spamku gems send pigs flying

Remember Spamku? A couple of weeks ago we reported a new fad in Japan, for writing haiku on the theme of Spam. Bizarre, we freely admit - but it seemed somehow to capture the imagination of *Independent* readers, provoking little oriental gems from all quarters of the kingdom, ranging across the aesthetic spectrum, from tacky to downright sticky.

We offered a prize of a week's pork luncheon meat to the winner, and a year's supply to the runner-up. Everyone, apart from the surprisingly large number of vegetarians who entered, wanted second prize. The favourite theme was wartime recollection:

*A tin hacked open
Soft meat thrust in anxious
mouths*

Down of D-day wrote Geoffrey Williams, of Faringdon, Oxfordshire, supplemented by Christopher Pelly, of Poole, Dorset:

*Remembered war
Diced spam on willowed china
I salivate now.*

and John Hougham, of Gravesend, Kent:

*Succulent pinkness
recalls my war-time breakfast.
Where's the powdered egg?*

A number were more topical, along the lines of:

*Though rubbery pink
Spam is free of BSE:
Safe to eat, I think.*

by John Meehan, of Brentwood, Essex, or reflective:

*Philosophical
Luncheon meat may say, "I'm pink"*

by Janet McKnight, of Loughborough, Leicestershire, or simply exhibitionist, like this one in Latin by PJ Brace, of London E3:

*Pueri panis frusta
Auferebant a me spam
Cur? - Inerat spam!*

Most common were mere "celebrations of spam":

*oh oh oh oh oh
Each syllable as precious
as a slice of spam.*

(Malcolm Bell, London SW16):

*Love - you can keep it.
I have to have pork in me.
Spam! Open a tin.
(Bobby Mill, Basildon, Essex);*

*Delicate batter:
Soft pink inside, golden fried:
Fragrant spam fritter.
(James Gray, by e-mail).*

So what about the victors? Runner-up would have been Adrian Mitchell, who, among a gaggle of offerings came up with the best nostalgia-driven version:

*Spam goes on and on,
Who but me remembers Spam's
wartime rival, Prem?
But we had to disqualify him
on Olympic amateur rules, so
the second prize goes to Timothy Robey, of Ainsdale, Southport, Merseyside, for politeness:*

*Feeding butterfly
Transforms gelatinous spam
To undrained bean.
And the winner, for wit, elegance and sheer poetic poise, is Neil Vesma, of Newent, Gloucestershire;*

*So that pigs might fly
I throw my spam at the sun
Pink arc through
blue air
How will they ever live it down?*

Therefore I am spam.

by Janet McKnight, of Lough-

صوكا من الامل

Twin towers to move in Wembley revamp

MICHAEL STREETER and JONATHAN GLANCEY

A £160m scheme to build a new 83,000-seat Wembley stadium could speed a British bid for the World Cup in 2006, its backers claimed yesterday.

The futuristic plans, drawn up by leading architect Sir Norman Foster, will be seen by many as a haven for a new breed of "couch potatoes", with many seats having armrests, instant video replays on individual television screens and a push-button facility to order food.

His "visionary" plan - published the day after England's penalty shoot-out defeat by Germany - also involves removing the famous 2,000-ton twin towers from the stadium to make a separate feature, and re-aligning the pitch to run north/south.

Sir Norman said the stadium, which would be built in under two years, missing just one FA Cup final - in 1999 - could boast "the best facilities in the world".

The key question, however, is whether the project will be adopted by the Sports Council as the new English National Stadium and attract the £100m lottery money that goes with it.

The decision, due in October, is a straight fight between London and Manchester. Yesterday, the owners of Wembley claimed



that becoming the national stadium could be an important part of the English strategy to stage the World Cup in 10 years' time, as well as the 2008 or 2012 Olympics.

Alan Coppin, chief executive of Wembley plc, said: "We will try to convince (the Football Association) that a local bid should be made for 2006. We believe that we have everything necessary to attract such an event."

However, he denied that the

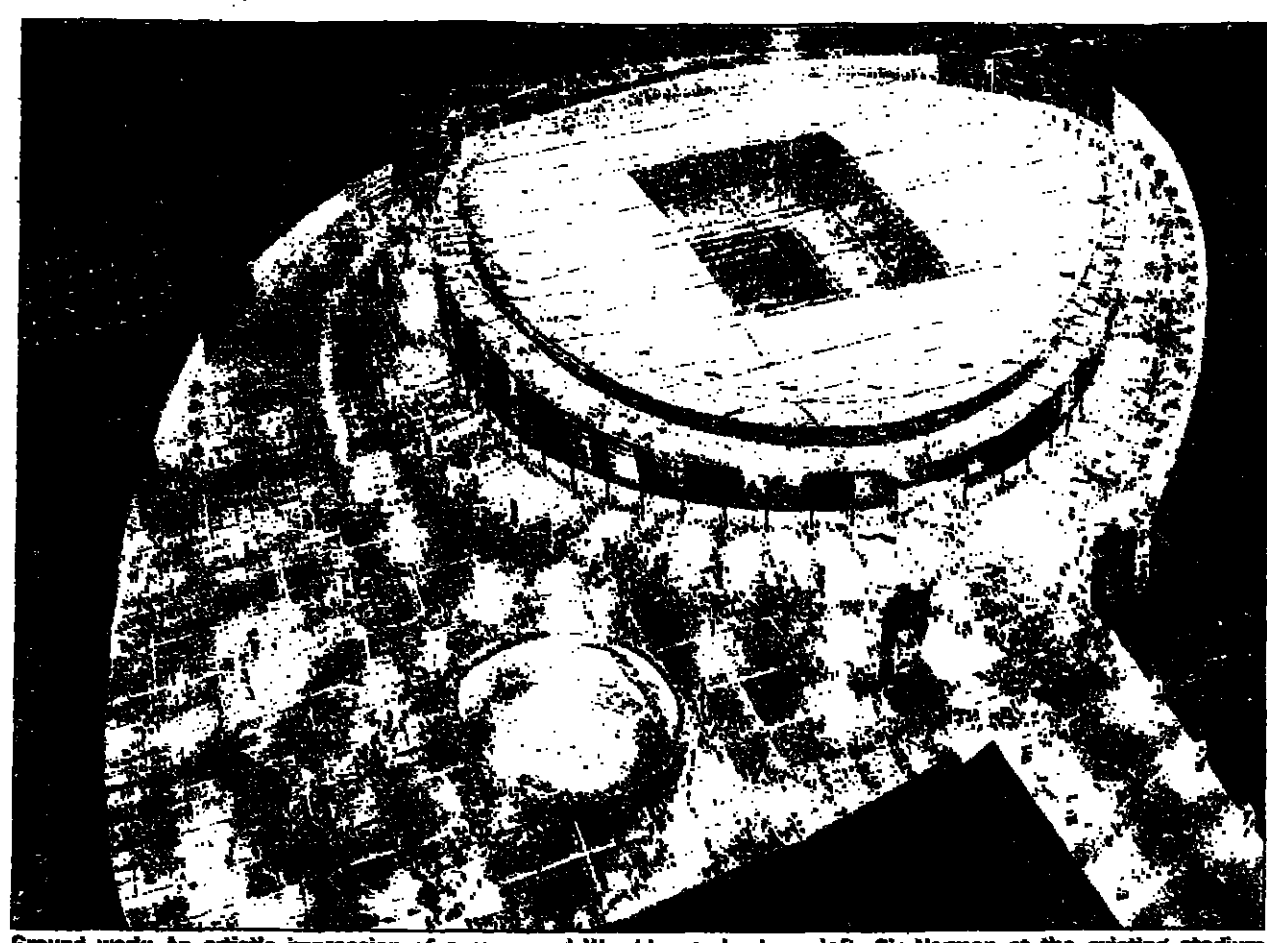
long-term future of Wembley was in doubt if Manchester won the national stadium contest, saying: "We have contingency plans," he said.

The FA has yet to decide on a bid for the 2006 World Cup, but officials are keen after the success of Euro 96; and the Government has voiced support. Wednesday night's violence is thought unlikely to affect any bid.

Organisers of the Manches-

ter bid privately hope that the decision to award the Millennium showcase events to Greenwich over Birmingham will encourage administrators to look outside the capital for another large-scale lottery project.

Spokesman Graham Stringer said their £125m scheme for east Manchester was at a more advanced stage of planning and, unlike the Wembley bid, did not involve lottery money benefiting a private company.



Ground work: An artist's impression of a revamped Wembley and, above left, Sir Norman at the existing stadium



Visionary: View of stadium Photographs: Peter Modlarrmid

Glittering vision sets jewel in sporting crown

When In-ger-land next play Germany at Wem-ber-lee (as Britain's famous national stadium is known locally), the game may well take place in the world's most advanced stadium. But, what will the crowd make of a super-sophisticated new building designed by Sir Norman Foster, where action replays can be had from the back of the comfortable seat in front, where a retractable, translucent roof keeps off the rain and where the urinals refuse to overflow in the time-honoured tradition?

Tradition is one of the key factors that will make of break Foster and Partners' radical redesign for Wembley Stadium. After all, Wembley has been at the heart of British sport and mass entertainment since it opened for the FA Cup Final in 1923.

In fact the 120,000-capacity stadium (later reduced to 100,000) was built as the showpiece of the British Empire Exhibition of 1924-25. As host to the Olympic Games in 1948 and the World Cup of 1966 when England beat Germany, this twentieth century Colosseum became a symbol of all that was best in British and world sport.

Yet, although we are fond of the idea of Wembley, the actual stadium building is remarkably dull. All anyone remembers, aside from general shabbiness are the twin, dalek-like towers, that brood over surrounding metroland.

Foster's plans to demolish the existing building, turn the site through 90 degrees so that the stadium will line up on a north-south rather than the existing east-west axis, and to resite the concrete daleks to form a heroic new gateway to the new stadium, are unquestionably dramatic. They are bound to be controversial and doubtless conservation bodies will argue in favour of the preservation of the old stadium, a living part of our imperial heritage.

The great strength of the Foster proposal, however, is that it

Jonathan Glancey looks at the plans for a showpiece Wembley stadium

ties the new stadium into what promises to be a glamorous and fully-fledged urban landscape. Empire Way - the pedestrian link that leads to the stadium from Wembley Park station - will become a handsome avenue, lined with trees, shops and cafes. It will open out into a vast pedestrian square which will allow the 80,000-capacity crowds to disperse in an enjoyable and relaxed fashion. At present, those going to Wembley are treated little better than cattle.

Five levels of underground parking and a revamped Wembley Stadium station (with direct connections to Heathrow, central London, Paris and Brussels) are part and parcel of an all-embracing plan for the 283-acre site that promises to transform the old sports centre into the most ambitious and certainly the best connected of its sort anywhere in the world.

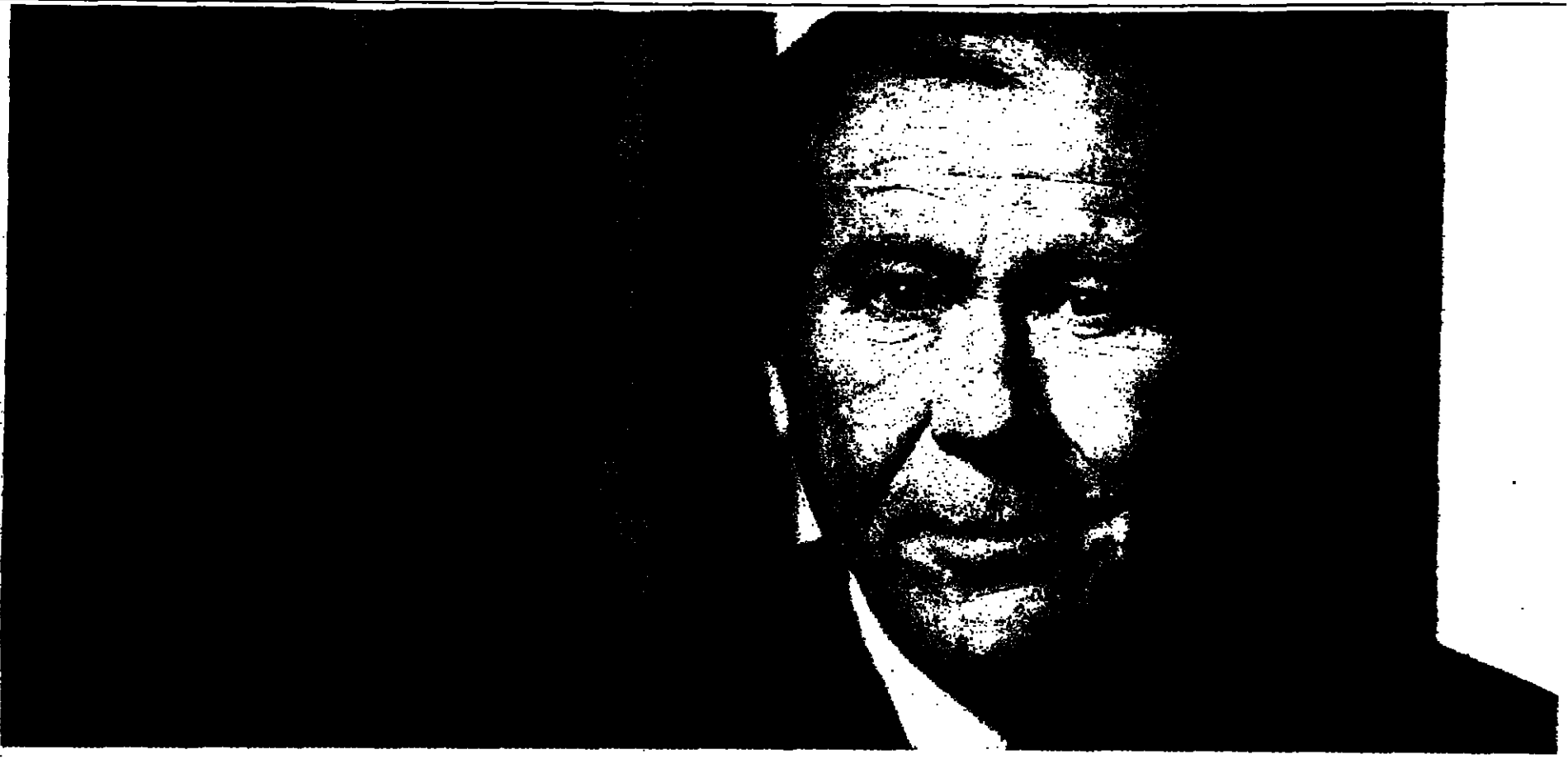
"The plan works on many levels," says Sir Norman. "Most importantly, it brings the stadium into the civic realm. In doing so, it will also break down the male dominance of sport at Wembley. Of course, some people aren't going to like that, but experience elsewhere in the world, in Italy, for example and in the US in particular, show that a civilised stadium is an immensely popular stadium. And highly successful financially."

The new stadium will have walls formed in part of giant video screens, so that events on the pitch inside can be broadcast to an even bigger audience.

"Of course, it's going to be a bit of a shock, at first," says Sir Norman, "but new stadia often are - think of the Colosseum in ancient Rome or the new stadium at Bari by Renzo Piano. But, if we're going to get this stadium built, we have to start detail design almost immediately. We need a clear two years for construction, so design time is of the essence."

Next time round, German fans will arrive at Wembley Stadium station by Eurostar train and enjoy what promises, conservationists and Lottery funds willing, one of the finest civic sports stadiums in the world. Sir Norman and his team have offered us a glittering vision of a sporting British future.

Sadly, though, if it gets the go-ahead, even he cannot guarantee a crowd of the future a victory for In-ger-land at Wem-ber-lee.



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news

World Heritage Site: Unesco application focuses spotlight on how the ravages of time have decayed a once-majestic area

Greenwich strikes out for global status

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

The Government today applies to the United Nations for the heart of Greenwich in south-east London to be designated a World Heritage Site.

If the application for the royal park and a clutch of historic and acclaimed buildings succeeds – and it is almost certain to – then Greenwich will join Stonehenge, the Tower of London, the pyramids, Taj Mahal and Auschwitz on the list of 470 world heritage sites.

All are judged by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco) to have outstanding value or significance for all mankind. Greenwich is a contender because of the majesty of its baroque architecture, particularly that of Wren and Inigo Jones, its place

in the history of a great maritime power, and its key role in developing navigation and time. But the application, which was described as thrilling by Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, also shines a spotlight on the decay, poor setting and traffic problems that beset Greenwich and several of the other 16 British World Heritage Sites already designated.

"It's fair to describe Stonehenge and the Tower of London as national disgraces," said Philip Whitbourn, secretary of the British branch of the International Council of Monuments and Sites, which advises Unesco. Both are damaged by heavy traffic and ugly modern buildings are sited next to them.

He added: "Greenwich also has big problems. It is bedevilled by traffic and one hopes World Heritage Site will give a boost



Unwelcoming: The concrete plaza by the Cutty Sark, where visitors emerge from the Thames foot tunnel or boat pier, is shabby

Photograph: Brian Harris

to the allocation of government funds needed to solve them."

Yesterday two local conservation groups and the Civic Trust, which lobbies for better urban environments, wrote to John Major asking for the Government to provide funds – or

allow lottery money – to divert the heavy traffic which goes through the centre of the proposed heritage site.

The A206, taking Kent and Essex traffic towards central London, cuts between Greenwich's two most important sets

of 17th and 18th-century buildings – The Royal Naval College and the Queen's House and National Maritime Museum. It also creates further pollution in an area visited by more than 2.5 million tourists each year. At present there is a six-month

experimental lorry ban, which has brought some relief but diverted heavy vehicles on to other nearby roads.

The London Borough of Greenwich has proposed an ambitious bypass – a sunken tunnel one-mile long which would

run along the side of the River Thames. But while nearby Lewisham and Bromley have recently had town centre bypasses, Greenwich's plans have been shelved. It has no prospect of raising the £110m it would cost and National Lottery funding has

also been ruled out. Yesterday Mrs Bottomley accepted there were traffic problems and no immediate prospect of a bypass.

Government advisers and pressure groups have other criticisms of Greenwich. There is only very limited public access to small parts of the Royal Naval College – two-and-a-half hours in the afternoon. The town of these is changing with the Navy moving out, and the University of Greenwich the most likely next occupant.

The concrete plaza surrounding the Cutty Sark tea clipper next door to it, where tourists emerge from the Thames foot tunnel or the boat landing pier, is bleak, shabby and unwelcoming. Greenwich council hopes to make major improvements next year.

Many of the lesser, government-owned buildings are shabby and peeling while they await new occupants. While public transport could be improved by a planned extension of the Docklands Light Railway from the north side of the Thames through Greenwich south to Lewisham, at the moment there is a dispute about whether there will be a station serving the core historic area itself.

There are also no firm plans on public transport links between the town centre area and the huge millennium exhibition planned for 2000 on a derelict gasworks a mile away.

Both Mrs Bottomley and the borough council said that becoming a World Heritage Site should help to solve these problems, although the title is a prestige one only – it attracts no extra funding for wealthy, developed nations.

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Blair to retain dreaded CCT and 'capping'

JOHN RENTOUL
Political Correspondent

A Labour Government will effectively keep laws forcing local councils to contract out their services, in yet another move by Tony Blair to remove what he sees as an electoral liability – at the expense of upsetting many in his party.

In a speech to council leaders next month, the Labour leader is also expected to toughen his plans to retain 'capping' of local council spending.

The Conservative law on compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) is hated by local council unions, and Frank Dobson, Labour's spokesman on local government, won a standing ovation at last year's Labour conference with a strong pledge to abolish it.

Mr Dobson claimed CCT cost the taxpayer £2 for every £1 it saved councils because lower wages cut tax revenues and required extra benefits. Mr Blair's office felt he had gone "too far", and opened top-level talks with Labour council leaders about how the principle of competition could be retained.

Peter Greenwood, chairman of the Labour-dominated Association of District Councils, told a council leaders' conference in Harrogate yesterday that CCT should be replaced by "a clear statutory duty on local authorities to pursue best value for the public we serve".

The key phrase "best value for the public" is expected to be included in Labour's pre-manifesto, to be launched by Mr Blair next week.

In talks with Mr Blair's office, council leaders have agreed to a legal requirement for councils to set up a committee charged with a duty to secure best value. While councils would no longer be under a direct legal obligation to invite bids to run services, the law would give local residents the right to challenge any council which did not

do so and could not show it was securing value for money.

Mr Blair is believed to argue that, after a Labour Government brought in a national minimum wage, contractors would not be able to compete by paying poverty wages, and that the objections to CCT would fall away. Under Labour, all workers would also have the right to trade union representation. But a source said: "It is difficult to get support for CCT through Labour Groups [of councillors] because of the intense propaganda against it over all these years."

Instead, Mr Blair's advisers believe they have found a way of refocusing legislation on the objective of CCT rather than the mechanism. But some tension remains between Mr Blair and Labour council leaders over the terms of "fair employment" conditions which councils would be permitted to specify in contracts.

Pat Doyle, leader of Hull council and spokesman for all leaders of Labour district councils, sets out the new policy in an article in today's *Municipal Journal*. He uses the phrase "fair competition", and describes it as "a useful spur to maximise performance". He also makes it clear that CCT would not be abolished until new "best value" legislation was enacted.

Mr Blair's advisers are also working on proposals to hold local referendums on increases in council tax above capping limits.

Gordon Brown, the shadow Chancellor, is believed to want even tighter central control of local spending than last year's policy document, which proposed "reserve powers" to cap a council's tax raising in "exceptional circumstances".

Mr Blair is expected to announce these policy changes in a speech next month to the inaugural meeting of the new Local Government Association, to be attended by the leaders of almost all English councils.

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DIAL DIRECT

G7 Summit: French fight to keep Saudi bomb off the agenda

Split looms over US call for war on terror

MARY DEJEVSKY
Lyons

Leaders of the world's seven richest nations were expected to agree a joint statement on terrorism last night, expressing abhorrence after the bomb attack on US servicemen in Saudi Arabia and solidarity with Washington's determination not to give in to terrorism.

The statement was to be finalised at the ceremonial dinner held to open the annual summit of the Group of Seven industrialised countries in the French city of Lyons.

Earlier in the day, President Bill Clinton, looking tired and drawn, described terrorism as "the security challenge of the 21st century" and called for the Lyons summit to become an "anti-terrorist summit". He had also brought forward his departure from France to Saturday evening from Sunday, in order to attend church services with the families of the dead servicemen in Florida.

Mr Clinton's call for Lyons to become an "anti-terrorist summit" was not shared by all participants, however, and threatened to become a source of differences. Almost as soon as the US President had spoken, the spokesman of the French President made it known that Jacques Chirac was proposing

a joint statement to be adopted at the heads of state dinner. The move appeared designed to ensure the subject of terrorism was dealt with before summit talks proper begin today and did not dominate the summit.

The agenda for the G7 summit has been carefully hammered out to accommodate divergent priorities among the seven member countries. The host country, France, had lobbied for a key place to be given to aid to less developed countries and indebtedness, along with its own domestic priority, employment.

The European countries are also keen to broach their disagreement with a new piece of US legislation, the Helms-Burton law, which punishes not just US companies, but also foreign companies, which trade with Cuba. The EU and other European countries object to the law which, they argue, gives the US extra-territorial authority over third countries.

Speaking yesterday, the President of the European Commission, Jacques Santer, tried to pre-empt any attempt by the US to use the Dhahran attack as justification for the Helms-Burton law as it stands, or for its extension to Iran and Libya.

In a statement, Mr Santer said: "The G7 is a gathering of partners whose economic

success has arisen from their commitment to peace, democracy and fair competition. The world that barbarism pays ... they must be proved wrong."

He called on G7 leaders "and the whole world" to "close ranks and send an unambiguous signal of solidarity in the fight against terrorism".

Mr Santer said: "In clear cases where countries fund, promote or harbour terrorists, and if all the signs show that negotiation and dialogue will not work, then the international community must act, if necessary through sanctions." However, in an apparent warning to the US, he added: "In such cases we must be careful to ensure that the punishment hits the criminal and fits the crime."

Mr Santer subsequently defended the EU's policy towards Iran, where it supports what he called "critical dialogue".

British and French spokesmen yesterday both said that they would, take up the Helms-Burton law with the Americans at the summit.

But they did not corroborate a view expressed by Mr Santer, that Washington may be about to soften its position on punishing those companies in third countries which trade with Cuba.

The growing pressure on the US over the Helms-Burton law, and the deep differences among the seven countries on the other subjects on the G7 agenda mean terrorism could well dominate the summit, in spite of the best efforts of the French.



Room with a view: A waitress in Perouges takes a photograph of Bill Clinton making a speech Photograph: AP

Second city relishes its taste of fame

The aspirations of Lyons to take its place on the world stage also appeared to have been underestimated by Paris, which found itself engaged in weeks of guerrilla warfare over arrangements for the visiting dignitaries and press. The result is a double press operation, with the Lyons publicity only just forbearing to say: "If you find the arrangements made by Paris unsatisfactory, try ours next door". Another result is a degree of ambiguity about the position of the mayor of Lyons, Raymond Barre. Until the last minute, it was not known whether Mr Barre, who was France's chief sherpa before the first G7 summit 21 years ago at Rambouillet, near Paris, would be invited to the opening heads of state dinner, even though it was in the precincts of his town hall.

Lyons itself has pulled out all the stops: the national flags of the seven countries, plus the European flag, wave all over the city. The central streets are decked out like a ship on her maiden voyage. The buses trundle round town with a pair of flags on the front - a French tricolour and one other, producing the arresting sight of a solid Lyons bus with the stars and stripes up front. And the gods have been kind: bringing Mediterranean sunshine that flatters the golden stone and

turns the city's two rivers (Rhône and Saône) deep blue.

Here and there, however, are touching signs that Lyons is a second city, not (yet) a world city. Obvious visitors are stared at with touching naivety by curious natives. One of the letters that spells "Credit Lyonnais" at the top of the bank's dominating tower does not light up - a defect you feel might have been rectified before a similar event in Paris. And while cultivating its reputation for gastronomy, Lyons is also being ultra-careful: hygiene inspectors have been checking the city's hundreds of restaurants with extra zeal: "Given Lyons' culinary reputation, it would be desperately embarrassing if there were an outbreak of food poisoning just as the eyes of the world are upon us," the city's chief hygiene officer said.

Was it Paris or Lyons that selected the hotels for the delegations with such a delicate sense of irony? The hotel of the EU delegation, the Hotel de la Cour des Loges, is in Rue du Boeuf.

SUMMIT DIARY

Mary Dejevsky

Massari denies condoning bomb

JOHN LICHFIELD

The Government's least favourite Saudi dissident was yesterday embroiled in a new dispute about his presence in Britain. Conservative politicians accused the exiled Islamist leader, Mohamed al-Massari, of, in effect, condoning the bombing in Dhahran in which 19 American servicemen died.

But Mr Massari, who successfully appealed against attempts to deport him to the Caribbean last year, said that extracts from a BBC radio interview had been quoted out of context by his Conservative critics. In an interview with the Independent, Mr Massari said that he rejected political violence of all kinds, including the Dhahran bombing. He said the attack on the US barracks was a "very disgusting" sign that Saudi Arabia might rapidly descend into the kind of pitiless tribal violence between Islamic militants and the authorities already seen in Algeria.

Earlier, the Prime Minister, and back-bench Tory MPs, had responded furiously to remarks made by the London-based dissident in an interview on BBC Radio Four's Today.

Mr Massari said the bombers had an "intellectually very strong case" to regard the presence of American forces in Saudi Arabia as an infringement of Islamic law and, therefore, an invitation to holy war. But he

also went on to say that this was a wrong interpretation and he did not condone the attack.

Dame Jill Knight, a leading member of the House of Commons home affairs select committee, said Mr Massari had come "dangerously close to condoning, if not congratulating, the Dhahran bombers". She said his remarks "sharpened" the arguments for his ejection from the UK. John Major said he failed to see how any intellectual case could be made for the bombing.

But Mr Massari accused his critics of wilfully misinterpreting his remarks. Under Islamic law, he said, it was forbidden for foreign forces to be based in Saudi Arabia under their own flag. But in this case the US forces had been invited by the Saudi authorities. However illegitimate the invitation, and however illegitimate the authorities, he said, it was absolutely wrong to attack US soldiers, who were present in good faith. This was the only fair reading of his comments to the BBC.

His organisation was committed, he said, to the overthrow of the Saudi royal family by non-violent means. The bombing was a sign that opposition movements within the country were losing patience. "Attacks of this kind could lead to a spiral of violence, God forbid, like in Algeria. I am extremely worried at that."

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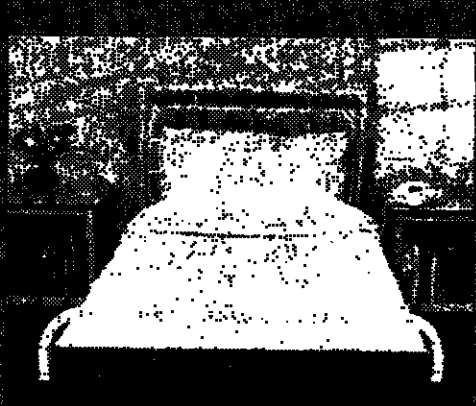
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international

This woman is living a nightmare. She is charged with spying on Nato. Her accusers? The East German secret police who are immune from prosecution. She faces a long jail sentence; they will stay free

IMRE KARACS
Düsseldorf

Gabriele Albin had known for a long time that she would have one final meeting with her "friend" at Düsseldorf's court-house but when it came, the encounter still caught her off guard. It was as she was walking towards the canteen during a recess that she heard the familiar voice from behind. "Hello, Gabriele," the middle-aged woman whispered. Ms Albin swung around, fixed her eyes on "Vera Wagner's" sheepish face, and then began to scream.

"Leave me alone ... Go away ... You have ruined my life," she shouted. "Vera" drew back, heads turned in the echoing corridor, the man from the Stasi a few paces behind stopped in his tracks, and Ms Albin's legs gave way. "I can't bear this any longer," she sobbed. "I am on trial while these people are free, paraded as witnesses against me. It's so unjust."

The justice of it all is for the court to determine. Ms Albin is charged with treason, for betraying Nato military secrets to the East German security agency, the Stasi. But if she is convicted, it will be with the help of testimonies obtained from full-time Stasi operatives who ensnared her in the 1980s and who themselves are immune from prosecution. All Stasi personnel dealing with foreign espionage but based in the former East Germany have been given an amnesty, with full pension rights. Some are even working

for united Germany's spy service, the BND. "Vera Wagner" - real name Edeltraut Richter - and Heinz Keller, the Stasi controller, are untouchable but obliged by law to provide evidence against the people they had once manipulated.

Ms Albin, who may be sentenced to a long prison term today, is not so fortunate. She seems to have had a sad life with many bad breaks, probably none worse than that fateful love affair in the summer of 1977 with the handsome man who introduced himself as Frank Dietzel. His real name, as she discovered many years later, was Rudolf Reck. He was

1984, after a row at a restaurant in the Austrian ski resort of Innsbruck. In 1986 Ms Albin married another man, and Reck vanished from the scene. But the marriage broke down a year later, along with her nerves, and Reck miraculously reappeared to console her. He even introduced her to "Vera", a warm, charming woman who also happened to work for the "peace foundation".

And so Ms Albin resumed her pilfering at the embassy, with "Vera" as the conduit of the stolen documents. The defence states this link soon fizzled out, but the prosecution maintains Ms Albin continued

exactly when the wheels of justice began to turn in earnest. But the key witness, Reck the Romeo, will not be able to honour the court with his presence. He died in an unexplained car accident last year, driving directly into the path of a train.

Step forward Herr Keller, the man to whom Reck reported in East Berlin, and "Vera Wagner". The accounts of the defence and prosecution diverge on the question of what motivated Ms Albin to betray her country, and the court seems eager to find evidence of greed. There is little doubt that Ms Albin was emotionally under Reck's control, but the prosecution maintains she was paid money for services rendered. "A fee was paid," confirmed Mr Keller, though he "could not remember" the sums involved, to the obvious displeasure of the public prosecutor, a tenacious woman with a sharp tongue. Nor could he be sure whether the money reached Ms Albin, who claims she did not receive it, or was pocketed by Reck.

Mr Keller, a man with a distinguished head of grey hair and healthy tan, was clearly uncomfortable with his role, casting nervous sideways glances at the defence bench. He was controller of "Source Gerhard", the code name for the Stasi agent in the US embassy. "Flow secret were the documents obtained from Source Gerhard?" he was asked. "They were marked confidential," he replied.

"Highly confidential?" "Perhaps."

'I'm on trial while these people are paraded as witnesses against me'

something of an East German James Bond, a skillful exponent of what is referred to in the trade jargon as "the Romeo method".

A military translator at the US embassy in Bonn, Ms Albin fell head over heels in love. They got engaged, though Reck was away most of the time, his absence attributed to business in Saudi Arabia. He also claimed to be working for a peace foundation; the cover he used to persuade his "fiancée" to steal military documents from the embassy. "Looking back on all of this now, almost 20 years later, I was a terribly naive fool," she admits.

The relationship ended in

to work for the Stasi until shortly before she quit her job at the embassy in early 1990.

She was arrested in 1991 and charged with espionage, her guilt established by the extensive files discovered at the Stasi headquarters after the fall of the Wall. For five years she has had to report to the authorities every week as the state prepared its case. Now, several nervous breakdowns later and after a flurry of expert testimonies stating that Ms Albin is unfit to stand trial, she is finally in the dock.

From the state's point of view, the delay made sense. The amnesty only came into effect at the end of last year, which is



Gabriele Albin: If she is convicted of treason, it will be with the help of the Stasi agents who lured her into spying for them

"Top Secret?" "No."

The prosecutor probed further: "Were there any plans for Nato military exercises among them?"

"No," Mr Keller said.

Oops, the German state's counter-espionage effort had just suffered a setback. The charge sheet specifically accuses Ms Albin of removing documents detailing Nato manoeuvres, such as "Operation Flitlock". They also equate her with "Source Gerhard", about which there appears to be some doubt. Ms Albin says she is "credited" with removing documents she never saw, and wonders

whether there might have been a "second man or woman" operating under the codename. Mr Keller testified that the Stasi had applied meticulous sex discrimination and never used a male codename for a female operator, or vice versa.

"Except in this case," the judge suggested.

"Except in this case," Mr Keller concurred.

"Vera" turned out to be of little use at the trial, so yet more retired Stasi agents were wheeled out. So far, none of them has been able to link Ms Albin directly with the hottest documents on display. Several testified that Ms Albin could not have known she was working for

the Stasi. Apparently, a previous attempt to dupe her failed when she went directly to her US superiors to report a suspicious incident.

Maybe there is another Gerhard out there, and maybe Ms Albin was not quite the Mata Hari she is alleged to be. It is even conceivable that bringing all those Stasi agents from their retirement cottages in eastern Germany to Düsseldorf has been a complete waste of the German taxpayers' money, and that Ms Albin's tribulations a decade after her crimes and six years after the collapse of the Warsaw Pact might not advance the cause of justice all that much.

Warring factions divide Pasok

ANDREW GUMBEL
Athens

Less than 24 hours after Andreas Papandreu's mortal remains were laid to rest, the heirs to his socialist movement, Pasok, were at each other's throats yesterday as a congress called to elect a new party leader degenerated into a shouting match between supporters of the rival candidates, Costas Simitis, the man who took over as prime minister of Greece six months ago, almost lost control of the packed congress hall during his speech because of an unfortunate turn of phrase about Mr Papandreu's autocratic leadership style. Supporters ofakis Tsachadzopoulos, his chief rival for the party leadership, erupted in fury over what they saw as an attack on their dead hero and drowned out Mr Simitis with chants of "Andreas, you live! You lead us!"

Mr Simitis's own supporters then began shouting back the party slogan, "Pasok is here, united and strong", creating pandemonium in the cavernous hall inside the Olympic Stadium in Athens. Mr Simitis only regained the attention of the 5,000 delegates with a dramatic challenge: vote for me as party leader, he said, or I will resign as prime minister.

Resignation would provoke a fratricidal search for a successor, plunging Greece into political chaos and possibly precipitating early elections.

Before yesterday's drama, the entourage which stowed by Mr Papandreu during his final illness had been lobbying for a compromise whereby Pasok's traditionalist wing, led by Mr Tsachadzopoulos, could come to a power-sharing agreement with Mr Simitis and his modernising faction.

The events of yesterday afternoon made clear that it will be warfare from here on, and that whoever wins the leadership will find it near impossible to unite the party. Before Mr Papandreu's death last Sunday, Mr Simitis was tipped to win if only because it made sense to give his government the political clout it needs to follow an energetic policy programme and prepare for elections some time in the next year.

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St Michael

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Patten plans a dignified retreat

STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

A year from this weekend, if all goes according to plan, Chris Patten, the last Governor of Hong Kong, will be standing on the bow of HMS *Briannia* with Prince Charles at his side, taking a last look at skyscraper-rimmed Victoria Harbour, the focal point of Hong Kong.

Sitting in his office in Government House after yet another week of being told to keep his mouth shut by China's various supporters in the territory, he was in reflective mood yesterday, contemplating his departure from the territory - which ceases to be a British colony a year on Sunday.

"I'm not a complete mutton-head," he told the *Independent*. "I don't think Britain should be planning anything like a triumphalist departure."

Rather, he thinks a "dignified retreat" would be more in order. But such is the poor state of Sino-British relations that China wants nothing more than a summary handing over ceremony.

Wrangling over the departure ceremony has been going on for more than a year and it may yet all end in tears. But, says Mr Patten, "people around the world would scratch their heads in wonderment" if some reasonable agreement cannot be reached, said Mr Patten.

Whether Mr Patten likes it or not, he is part of the problem. China calls him a "criminal through the ages" and cannot bear the idea of having the Governor play any kind of major role in the hand over ceremony. Mr Patten, displaying self-conscious diplomacy, denies that this is the problem.

It is unclear whether many Hong Kong people care much about how the British depart. They are becoming an increasingly marginal factor in the colony's affairs. Mr Patten admits that a "bad flavour" was created by Britain's failure to furnish Hong Kong's British passport holders with the right of abode in Britain. He argues

that people "feel as strongly as they do because Britain is having to end this particular story of empire in a totally different way from all the others. Here a free society is being handed over to a society which, shall we say, has a different view of freedom."

Although the Governor was criticised for his office in Government House after yet another week of being told to keep his mouth shut by China's various supporters in the territory, he was in reflective mood yesterday, contemplating his departure from the territory - which ceases to be a British colony a year on Sunday.

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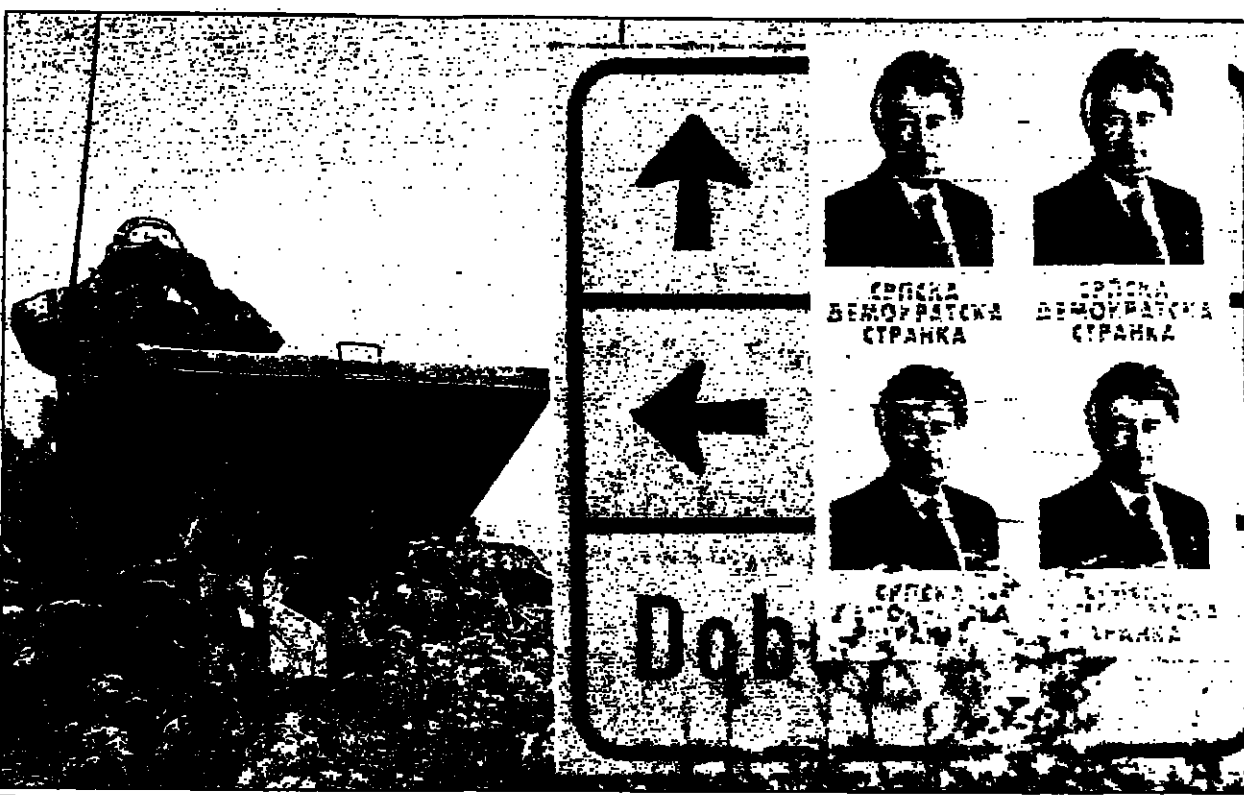
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Karadzic forced out of Bosnian elections



They seek him here? A US military police officer on watch near the Bosnian Serb city of Doboj

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader and indicted war criminal, was fighting for his political survival yesterday after succumbing to intense international pressure not to stand in Bosnia's first post-war elections next September.

One week after indicating his intention to run for re-election as president of Republika Srpska, the Serb-controlled half of Bosnia, Mr Karadzic has been forced to back down in the face of what his Prime Minister, Gojko Kljickovic, called "horrible pressures exerted by the international community and Yugoslavia [Serbia and Montenegro]".

The decisive factor appears to have been a threat by President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia to restore sanctions against the Bosnian Serbs unless Mr Karadzic withdrew from the elections. Mr Milosevic has in turn been under US pressure to force Mr Karadzic out of power or face renewed international isolation.

Mr Karadzic is still doing his

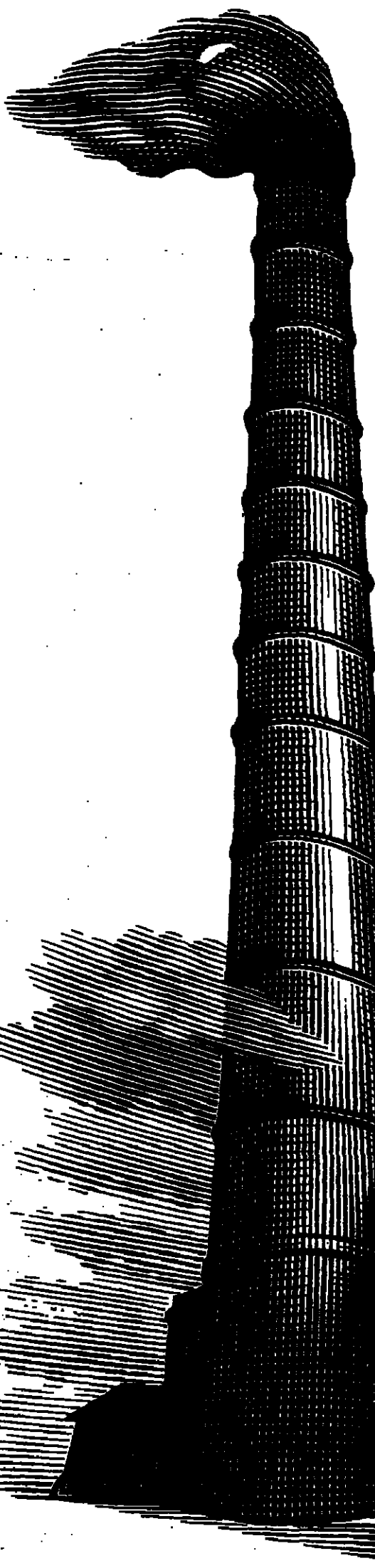
utmost to avoid going on trial at the United Nations War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague, where a public hearing opened yesterday against him and his military commander, General Ratko Mladic.

In exchange for not standing in the elections, Mr Karadzic wants to remain as president until polling day on 14 September and aims to retain the leadership of the ruling Serbian Democratic Party (SDS). In his view, these arrangements are conditional upon Western security guarantees for Republika Srpska and upon an assurance that international arbitration over the control of the contested northern Bosnian town of Brcko should go in the Serbs' favour.

Carl Bildt, the international High Representative for Bosnia, dismissed Mr Karadzic's conditions as unacceptable.

US officials said that even if Mr Karadzic was now "marginalised" on the political scene, this was not the same as his "unconditional removal from power" and transfer to The Hague for trial - both of which are stipulated in the Dayton accord.

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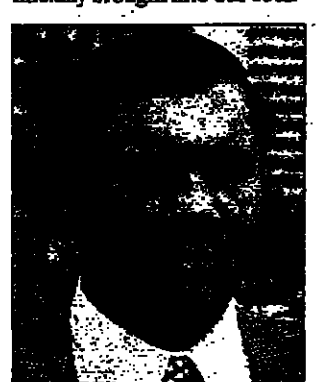
INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

Yeltsin's new ally reveals his darker side

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

With less than a week before the run-off which will determine whether he stays in the Kremlin, Boris Yeltsin may rue the speedy way he lavished power on Alexander Lebed in the hope of winning over the former general's supporters. Mr Lebed is showing signs of being a liability.

Yesterday, while addressing a meeting of Cossacks, he said Russian religious sects, including Mormons, were "mould and scum" which had been "artificially brought into our country."



Alexander Lebed: Yeltsin may yet clip his wings

try with the purpose of perverting, corrupting, and ultimately breaking up our state". Such "foul sects", he continued, must be outlawed because they posed "a direct threat to Russia's security". The country must defend its "established, traditional religions" - namely, Russian Orthodoxy, Islam and Buddhism. Noticeably, he omitted Judaism.

Such intolerance from a leading politician would have caused an outcry in the West. But in Russia such views, especially among the nationalists Lebed was addressing, are not thought remarkable.

Yet even if he was playing politics - sounding off in the hope of winning votes - Mr Lebed was

guilty of bad tactics. If Mr Yeltsin is to beat the Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov, he needs to attract the votes of 5.5 million people who voted for the liberal economist Grigory Yavlinsky in the first round. Mr Lebed, a moderate on most other fronts, yesterday gave them a good reason not to bother voting at all.

His unpredictability and political inexperience is undoubtedly worrying the Kremlin, and raises the possibility that his wings will be clipped after the election. It may help explain why Mr Yeltsin's energetic campaign appears to be ending in a whimper. The president was to have been on a trip yesterday, but he decided to remain in Moscow; mindful, no doubt, of the need to keep an eye on his protégé.

Yesterday's performance was not Mr Lebed's first bout of excitable behaviour since becoming the secretary of the Security Council. Last week he accused five generals of plotting a coup after the firing of the Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev. He subsequently sharply toned down the allegations - although four of the officers were sacked. Whatever the truth of the matter, this is scarcely the kind of indecision one would expect from a security chief at his level.

This and other episodes may be part of a larger development; as the presidential race draws to a close, the Kremlin is moving closer towards Mr Zyuganov's camp. Mr Lebed yesterday supported the idea of a coalition government - an idea, albeit different in form, first suggested by the Communist leader.

And, after vilifying the Communists for months, Mr Yeltsin said he was "ready for dialogue and cooperation with all those for whom the fate of Russia is a top priority", including "honest Communists".

The question is whether this is just vote-seeking posturing or will they really work in unison after polling day.

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14
international

Vietnam party bosses get cold feet over reform

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY
Hanoi

At nine o'clock this morning, amid much solemnity, the Communist Party of Vietnam will convene its Eighth Congress, and on the streets of Hanoi yesterday there was only one topic of conversation. Was it the future of *doi moi*, the policy of cautious free market "renovation" which has transformed Vietnam's economy since the 1980s? No. Was it the Orientations and Tasks of the 1996-2000 Socio-Economic Plan, due to be adopted over the weekend? No. It wasn't even the imminent arrival of the Chinese Prime Minister, Li Peng, the most senior Chinese visitor to attend a congress since 1936. The question Vietnamese were eager to ask a British visitor yesterday was: "What about the England-Germany penalty shoot-out?"

I haven't mastered the Vietnamese for *we were robbed* but the lesson was clear. For all the lofty decisions being weighed in the committee rooms, the country has more interesting things to occupy itself with than politics. In the popular imagination, *Doi Moi* (Congress) 1994 is no match for *Euro '96*.

At any time other than Congress week, it would not be obvious that Vietnam was a Communist country at all. The city has been festooned with red flags and banners but, these apart, Hanoi has a less authoritarian atmosphere than Tokyo or Seoul. Policemen are polite and unarmed. The media, although state controlled, are relaxed.

Compared to Ho Chi Minh City, which, as Saigon, was capital of the anti-Communist

south, Hanoi is a newcomer to the free market. But the streets seethe with touts offering rides, shoe-shines, Western books, magazines and women. Advertising is in its infancy but the proliferating billboards demonstrate a growing spirit of competition for everything from Pepsi Cola and LG Insurance to Trust Quality Condoms.

But this is a superficial impression: the interest of the Congress is how it will square this modest flowering of free enterprise with a political system still intolerant of dissent and suspicious of the capitalist world. "The ordinary Vietnamese I know never say a word about politics," a diplomat in Hanoi said. "But there are still knocks on the door in the dead of night, and those red flags outside the houses - they're certainly not all there because the owners decided on their own initiative to put them there."

The limited tolerance of the free market, initiated by the Communist Party, has brought about change, but Hanoi has no Mikhail Gorbachev, a reformer intent on democratisation. Vietnam's communists have adapted to survive and so far the experiment has worked.

At the last congress but one, 10 years ago, Vietnam was an economic basket case - a Soviet-style economy, plagued by red tape and corruption. These days growth is more than 8 per cent, but inflation seems under control: this week the government announced it had fallen to a three-year low of 4.6 per cent.

But in the months leading up to the Congress, there have been signs that *doi moi* may be slowing down. In February, Hanoi witnessed the extraordi-

nary spectacle of Western video tapes, girly calendars and music cassettes, being crushed under a steam roller. Loudspeakers have broadcast warnings against such imported "social poisons", and foreign companies, including soft drinks and underwear manufacturers, have had their billboards removed.

Whether the clampdown was just an angry spasm or whether it represents a new current in Vietnamese Communism remains to be seen. Certainly, the Party Congress shows little sign of introducing new changes. Partly this is a problem of leadership. Delegates have been unable to agree on new occupants for the top posts, so the present leadership, including the 79-year-old Party Secretary, Do Muoi, and the 75-year-old President, Le Duc Anh, will be re-elected. A resolution to keep 60 per cent of GDP under state control has been dropped from the Congress's policy document after objections from foreign governments, but diplomats believe it will remain an unofficial bar to market reform.

Political reform is not on the agenda. "We refuse categorically pluralism and a multi-party system," Hong Ha, the General Secretary of the Central Committee said yesterday. "Why? Because it is contrary to the political line of the Communist Party and the aspiration of the Vietnamese people." For the time being that may be true, but without a change of leadership, the Party may find its Xth Congress, in five years' time, a rockier one. "This society is changing so fast," one diplomat said. "And expectations are rising faster than the Party's ability to control them."



Flagging interest: Vietnamese riding to work in Hanoi under a red banner advertising the ruling Communist Party congress. Photograph: AP

Cook's heirs cash in on the white man's heritage

Captain Cook has just stepped ashore from a long-boat attended by his crew. A group of Aborigines appears suddenly from the bushes and threatens the white men with spears. On the slope above, a young woman downs her umpteenth whisky cocktail. When Cook's men fire muskets into the air to warn off the blacks, the woman shouts: "Yeah - shoot 'em!"

I am in Cooktown, the furthest it is possible to reach before the roads drift off into the Never Never of far north Queensland, or FNQ as the locals call it. Here, in June 1770, Captain James Cook beached his barque, the *Endeavour*, after it struck coral on the Great Barrier Reef. And here on the same spot, every year since 1960, the locals re-enact Cook's landing in meticulous detail.

There is something quintessentially Australian about Cooktown and the *Endeavour*

Festival, as it is known. It is not the Australia of the big cities to the south, labouring under the late 20th century blights of pollution, crime, unemployment and breakneck change. It is an Australia of the not-so-distant past, a place where time had largely stood still but which is now being encroached upon by, and coming to grips with, the outside world.

When Cook and his party landed on the Endeavour River, where Cooktown now stands, they had spent six weeks discovering and charting the east coast of Australia. They spent another six weeks on the river's shores, from June to August 1770, repairing the *Endeavour*, making contact with the Aborigines and venturing inland to take plant samples. Theirs was the first known white settlement in Australia, pre-dating the arrival of British convicts at Botany Bay by eight years.

COOKTOWN DAYS

"Whatever Australians do about getting rid of the monarchy, they must not get rid of their flag," a visiting British woman told me in Cooktown. "Because all those pioneers who forged through the rainforests, built the railways and explored the Outback did it under the British flag." I did not want to disillusion her, but I suspect that they did it from two basic motives: survival and greed.

It was greed that built Cooktown in the first place. The town was established in 1873 as a base for the rush that erupted after gold was found on the nearby Palmer River. The gold rush was the beginning of the end for the local Aborigines, who unsuccessfully tried to fight what they saw as an invasion of their

traditional lands. In its gold rush heyday, Cooktown had 63 pubs, 40 brothels and 30,000 people. Today the population has dwindled to 1,450. Greed of a different kind made the Queensland state government bulldoze a coastal road through the World Heritage-listed Cape Tribulation rainforest during the 1980s to make Cooktown more accessible to tourists.

The road is an environmental disaster. But, in the interests of seeing what made the little town the flashpoint for Australia's green protest movement, I set out for the four-hour trip. I paused on the way at the Lions Den Hotel, whose timber beams, corrugated iron walls and its clientele appeared unchanged since it was built in 1878. "There'll be a lot of drinking in

Cooktown this weekend," an old-timer told me. "Look out for the drunks on the road."

Cooktown is a place where the Wild West meets the tropics. The town's charming old buildings nestle under rainforest which falls down to a shore undisturbed since Cook landed 226 years ago. Revellers packed the pub and streets well into Saturday night.

By Sunday morning, there was not a drunk or a XXXX can in sight. Visitors gathered soberly on the foreshore for the Cook re-enactment, culminating in the unfurling of the Union Jack. The 18th century costumes, lovingly researched, looked very otherworldly in this setting. The local Aborigines stayed away.

"Can you blame them?" asked Vince O'Flaherty, the festival's organiser. "I've tried to get them more involved. Until two years ago, it was called the

Discovery Festival. They weren't happy about that. They were here for 40,000 years." What would Cook have thought of it all? Cooktown honoured him with an elegant stone column in 1887, a Captain Cook Museum opened in 1970 and a bronze statue erected in 1988. So why, when Australia is seriously debating republicanism and trying to right past wrongs to Aborigines, does this pocket of Cook "overkill" flourish?

In Australia's endless search for that elusive concept, national identity, I suspect it is because something about Cook has become rooted in the national psyche: his courage, individualism, resilience and humanitarianism. And that is why we shall probably go on seeing the Union Jack raised once a year at Cooktown, long after Australia becomes a republic.

Robert Milliken

SIGNIFICANT SHORTS

Taliban rebels spurned a peace offer from Afghanistan's new Prime Minister, Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, yesterday, just one day after launching a storm of rockets that killed 62 people and wounded 130 others in Kabul. It was the most destructive attack on the capital in more than a year. "Several times they offered peace, but they are not honest. That is why we are not willing to talk," said Maulana Ghomi, a Taliban commander who ordered a barrage of tank shells and rockets to be fired on Kabul on Wednesday. "The only way we can solve this problem is by fighting. We don't want to target people, but sometimes it misses the target and hits the people." AP - *Kotal-e-Takht, Afghanistan*

Turkish troops backed by air power killed dozens of Kurdish guerrillas in a cross-border raid against a rebel base in the mountains of northern Iraq. "It is the biggest cross-border operation in the past four months or so," a military official in the eastern Turkish town of Tunceli said. The regional governor's office in Diyarbakir said troops began to pull back towards Turkey after killing 44 Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) rebels. Three troops were wounded. *Reuters - Tunceli, Turkey*

Madrid said it was prepared to talk to Basque separatist groups, if certain conditions were met. The Foreign Minister, Abel Matutes, said if Eta stopped its terror campaign and released a prison officer kidnapped months ago, "then the right conditions would be there to begin at least minimal dialogue between democratic parties and [Eta's political wing] Herri Batasuna". It is the first time Madrid has conceded the possibility of indirect talks, a position long urged by all political parties in the Basque country. Mr Matutes' comments came during a week-long Eta ceasefire announced last Sunday. The conservative government dismissed the ceasefire as too short and a mockery while Jose Ortega Lara remained hostage. *Elizabeth Nash - Madrid*

Burma's junta played down the controversial death of a former honorary consul, omitting from an obituary published in state newspapers that he died in prison. Government sources, meanwhile, claimed that all but three of 262 supporters of pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi rounded up last month had been freed. But Ms Suu Kyi's party said that 69 were still believed detained. The death in prison of James Leander Nichols, 65, who served as an honorary consul until 1978 for Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Switzerland, has turned into the latest public relations fiasco for the government. AP - *Rangoon*

The Council of Europe called on Albania's political parties to help resolve the country's political crisis and to consider holding a new round of national elections. The council also urged Albania to scrap laws that bar former communists from running for office or taking government posts until 2002. AP - *Strasbourg*

Seven people in Bahrain were jailed on charges of planting bombs at two luxury hotels in the country. Abdullah Nasser Mohammed al-Buk was jailed for life and six others received prison terms ranging from seven to 15 years for planting bombs at Le Royal Meridien and the Diplomat Hotel. *Reuters - Manama*



Five drug offenders are led away for execution in Peking yesterday. China executed 110 people as part of International Anti-Drug Day. Photograph: Reuters

An explosion at a chemical factory in China's northern port of Tianjin has killed 19 workers and injured more than 20. Experts were investigating the cause of the blast, which rocked the factory 16km from Tianjin city centre on Wednesday. *Reuters - Peking*

Iraq will use a large part of the \$2bn (£1.3bn) from an oil-for-food deal with the United Nations to buy wheat, sugar and rice, Iraqi Trade Minister Mohammed Mehdi Saleh said. "Rice, wheat and sugar will take a large portion of the food programme," he said after a two-day meeting of the Iraq-Indonesia joint commission on economic, scientific and technical co-operation in Jakarta. *Reuters - Jakarta*

A woman dubbed the "black widow" by the Spanish press has been accused of poisoning seven people and killing four in an eight-year murder spree conducted with the help of her teenage daughter. Police in Barcelona said they had uncovered one of the worst cases of serial killing in Spain's criminal history. Margarita Sanchez, 43, is charged with murdering her husband, her brother-in-law and two neighbours since 1988 and trying to kill another three people, including her mother-in-law, by feeding them poisoned food and drink. *Reuters - Barcelona*

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An obsolete club for the global great and good

Last weekend thousands marched through the streets of Lyons, where the annual G7 summit gets going today, to protest. They demanded that "other voices" be heard. G7 was denounced as "a coven of ultra-liberal free marketeers who want to cut back welfare and bring down salaries". On this, at least, the marching radicals were plumb wrong. Genuine free marketeers wouldn't be seen anywhere near a gathering partly created to interfere with trade (in drugs, arms and various other undesirable products) and to manipulate markets. But on the first count, the demonstrators had a point. Who do these elite summiteers represent? Who's missing? What are their conduits both to restive domestic populations — some growing dangerously suspicious of international co-operation — and to the unrepresented Group of 100, that is to say the rest of the world? The truth is that G7 has become an anachronistic grouping of the global great and good. It is no longer even much of an excuse for junketing. On Bill Clinton and John "motorway café" Major, Paul Bocuse's culinary skills will go to waste. Jean Chrétien, the Canadian premier, might appreciate the cooking, but what on earth is Canada doing at a summit of what are reputedly the world's seven biggest economies? Which is not to object to summity. On the contrary, it daily becomes more vital for national leaders to make the effort

to semi-train economic globalisation and the myriad "forces" at work in the world by building structures of co-operative work between nations and global regions. Membership of international bodies will always form a variable geometry: some overlaps will be untidy. But the G7 problem is different and acute. Those Lyons demonstrators were right, albeit for the wrong reason: the very existence of G7 sends the wrong signals. The Group of Seven Industrialised Nations was a step-child of that period after the collapse of the Bretton Woods agreement when the international monetary regime was stitched together in *ad hoc* meetings of the big trading nations which took place in New York hotels or French palaces. (The frequency with which France plays host to summits is a tribute to French diplomatic determination not just to sit at the top table but to ensure the table itself is made of Cevennes oak. It is also a manifestation of the problem. Sooner or later the French, as indeed the British and indeed the rest of the world, have to recognise that the Seven Years' War is over and France is now days a power of the second rank.) Then, the Plaza and Louvre accords served their purpose. The 1970s oil shock was, eventually, absorbed. In the 1980s, by contrast, the G7 created itself as a macroeconomic talking shop which took on airs — and Lady Thatcher's lust for global recognition did



not help. Meetings became occasions for pretending the global economy was under political management or that some single "solution" existed for a problem, such as unemployment or structural rigidity, that is itself plural. Or they became — as Lyons may become — mere opportunities for electorally needy US presidents to offer domestic audiences examples of leadership in action. Meanwhile the world continued to change. Government and Opposition here in Britain may argue till the cows come home about the UK's position in the league tables for competitiveness, investment, income growth. Yet most

observers would agree that, as the century turns, the British economy is no longer one of the seven biggest, measured in absolute size. According to the OECD the top seven after the United States now are China, Japan, Germany, India, France and Italy; the UK is eighth, with Russia and Brazil bustling up ninth and tenth. It will not be long before Indonesia and Thailand are knocking at the door — and a good thing, too, if their heterodox experience of growth subverts conventional wisdoms. If one takes the view that much conversation in international forums is fairly empty, it would be unfair to single out

this club. But G7 has a special slant. Its existence risks slowing a process of intellectual adjustment through which the leaders and the people of the Western democracies must come to see the new world for what it is — a world much more Asian and Pacific than that which gave birth to Keynes, Cold War and the sundry committees of inquiry chaired by Helmut Schmidt. For countries such as the UK and France, with their disproportionate military might and all their historical baggage, adjustment is even harder. Membership of G7 discourages our adaptation while blocking the diplomatic space that ought to be opened up to new powers. "Diplomatic" is of course no longer an adequate description of a terrain which covers trade, aid, armaments, regional insecurities and our (Western) claim to police universal rights, even inside the boundaries of strong states.

From ballot box to 18-yard box

Our support for referenda and other ballot-boxery notwithstanding, it appears Euro '96 might have the spin-off benefit of offering an alternative dispute-resolution procedure — the penalty shoot-out. What Wednesday night proved is that it is possible to distill several months' training and preparation into 10 minutes of one-on-one passion and anguish, with a clear victor at the end but honour held high. Now, why not turn that on the postal strike? Or the annual London tube strike? Or Scottish devolution? An end to wars and elections; just straight penalties. Perhaps sport has something to offer the real world, after all.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Constitutional change for a better life

Sir: It is most unfortunate that in a so-called mature democracy a key element in a political leader's strategy is to set about creating anxiety amongst an electorate. The fact that this can happen in the UK to the extent that it does is because we do not have a clearly defined set of rules, usually called a constitution, under which change can be promoted with comfort.

What the Tories constantly fail to accept is that constitutional reform is not about constitutional nor electoral mechanics — it is about a new kind of politics to obtain a better quality of life and services to those we seek to serve ("Blair set for poll on political reform", 26 June).

Up to recent times it may be the case that without a written set of rules the British people had come to take the ruling order for granted. It is now clear that many have rumoured that all is not well with the state of Britain. The penny has dropped that we do not have the checks and balances that other modern democracies use to effect.

Whether it is devolution or a Bill of Rights people need to be comfortable with change. The Prime Minister shows time and time again with his language that he wants people to remain anxious towards change based upon their ignorance of the ways things are run. Tiny Blair wants people to be comfortable with Labour's package of change based upon knowledge of why we promote change. There is no better test than setting out a stall and asking the electorate.

JEFF ROOKER
MP for Birmingham Perry Barr (Lab)
House of Commons
London SW1

Sir: John Major rejects the need for a Bill of Rights for the UK because it "would diminish Parliament's historic role as the defender of individual freedoms" (leading article, "Major launches a defence of the indefensible", 27 June).

However, the principle of parliamentary sovereignty does not in and of itself necessarily protect human rights. Of the findings of violations by the European Court of Human Rights against the UK, over three quarters have resulted from legislation passed through Parliament. Parliament is allowing laws to take effect which, at the same time as breaching our international obligations, also fall below the minimum acceptable standard of human rights.

Rather than diminishing the role of Parliament, a Bill of Rights would have the opposite effect. On incorporation of a Bill of Rights, it would become incumbent on Members to ensure that proposed policy and legislation conforms to its minimum standards. As such the process of legislative scrutiny by MPs would be greatly enhanced. An incorporated Bill of Rights should mean that policy is less likely to become law which could undermine guaranteed rights and freedoms.

Its effective implementation, with accompanying reforms to the parliamentary process, should, contrary to popular myth, reduce judicial activism and not increase it.

JONATHAN COOPER
Legal Director
Liberty
London SE1



The operation was a success but the patient died

Funds for NHS budget deficit

Sir: Health service funding ("NHS cut to the bone, say doctors", 25 June) will continue to be an issue while those of us who work for the health service are expected to do too much with too few resources. At some point a government (probably not this one) is going to have to talk openly about rationing and provide an appropriate level of funding to run the NHS properly.

Most health service professionals, not just doctors, are not going to take any government seriously until funding is up to around median OECD levels because we all know that the "bargain buy" that Nicholas Timmins talks about isn't just about health service efficiency, it is also about the exploitation of its staff ("... but is that just another easy soundbite?", 25 June). Most health service employees work far beyond their contracted hours out of a mixture of dedication, a desire not to neglect patients, worries about litigation and the pressure to meet targets arbitrarily set by government.

A substantial chunk of the £6bn deficit could be mopped up either by appropriately rewarding existing health service personnel or more sensibly by raising staffing levels so that those of us who work for the health service already don't have to work the excessive hours that damage our own health and cause us to neglect our families.

Deciding where extra money should come from is a matter of setting priorities. I would respectfully suggest that this country stops playing at great nations, sets a realistic defence

budget appropriate to the needs of a small trading nation in northern Europe (for that is what we actually are) and then set about providing a properly funded education and health service.

J R JAMES
Consultant Paediatrician
Northallerton,
North Yorkshire

Sir: Nicholas Timmins has been a distinguished and admired contributor to your columns for many years, but he has now reached a new peak in his understanding of the National Health Service in being able to rap the silly doctors' knuckles for their gross exaggeration of NHS funding needs, and to assert, with absolute confidence, that the funding deficit is "at most a few hundred million".

It would be a great comfort to those of us concerned with health services if he could share his arithmetic with us. His view, however, does not square with the position in individual purchasing authorities where shortfalls of £20-30m are currently being identified or in Trusts which are so well funded that they have to stop elective surgery completely.

In truth, as Mr Timmins must know, the level of the deficit is difficult to estimate to a high degree of accuracy. For years, however, the recurring indications have been that it is around five per cent — £2bn on the £40bn currently expended.

It is depressing and demoralising that the NHS, which overall delivers an outstandingly effective and economical service to the

nation, should be prevented from realising its full potential for the benefit of the public by virtue of such a proportionally small deficit.

RONALD M POLLOCK
International Health
Planning Consultant
London, NW1

Teacher training needs framework

Sir: Earl Russell (Letters, 15 June) is quite right in one respect. The Government would not attempt to tell a surgeon when to operate. What the Government does expect is that publicly funded medical training should teach him how to carry out a range of operations.

The same must be true for teachers: that is why Gillian Shephard has announced the introduction of tighter rules for the training of primary teachers in English and mathematics and the longer term aim of a professional framework for all teacher training.

The purpose is not to prescribe when different teaching techniques should be used, but to ensure that all teachers know how to use the most effective ones.

Surely the noble Earl would not disagree that a wide range of proven professional skills is important in any profession? ROBIN SQUIRE
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
Department for Education and Employment
London SW1

Labour's welfare to work strategy

Sir: Your suggestion in your editorial ("Labour tinkers at the margins of welfare", 25 June) that the Commission on Social Justice (of which I was a member) "framed an entire agenda of policy proposals around the theme" of welfare to work is not quite accurate. Welfare to work was one of the central planks of the Commission's social security strategy; the other was a modernised, strengthened social insurance scheme.

It is the absence of this second plank in the Labour Party's strategy which makes its policy paper so disappointing. This is the wider significance of the Party's refusal to commit itself to abolition of the Jobseeker's Allowance, despite its own recognition that it "has fundamentally undermined the insurance principle".

If successful, the Labour Party's welfare to work strategy could mean a real reduction in the numbers living in poverty. But the work has to be there and, as you note, at a decent wage. Moreover, the strategy will take time. Welfare to work therefore has to be complemented by other reforms which will address the inadequacies of the social security system for those of working age who remain on benefit.

RUTH LISTER
Professor of Social Policy
Department of Social Sciences
Loughborough University
Loughborough, Leicestershire

Church weakened

Sir: I suggest that David Friedrich Strauss's *Life of Jesus* was not deeply subversive of belief in early Victorian England ("Made in Germany", 25 June) but that the negative reaction to it then by the Church in this country resulted in many seeking a religious faith outside the Church.

Here was a book which, from within the Church, offered a thoughtful mythological interpretation of the New Testament in place of a weakening literalism which the Church has appeared to support ever since.

If theologians and biblical scholars had encouraged an English translation of the work soon after its German publication in 1835 there would have been opportunity for healthy debate and for its ideas to be absorbed into and adapted within the Church's thought. Instead, there was a delay of 11 years before George Eliot's translation appeared, financed by and used only by those who wanted to hasten social reform by weakening the Church.

The Rev R T H PEARSE
Network Secretary, Sea of Faith
Loughborough

Sharpshooting

Sir: After the current farcical situation of penalty shoot-outs for both the semi-finals of Euro '96 could we not have a penalty shoot-out before the start of the match so one side knows from the outset they are going to win provided they hold their nerve.

GLYN FORD
MEP for Greater Manchester East
Brussels

Control of adverts in the countryside

Sir: We loved your cartoon on 20 June ("More advertising hoardings will be allowed in the country"). It was so out of date. An echo from the past. There have not been any advertising hoardings in the countryside for over 40 years.

What's more there is no question of them coming back again. The fact is that all advertising hoardings (except some which screen commercial building sites) require prior express approval from a local council. It is a pity that when the Department of the Environment suggests a sensible piece of de-regulation (based on the recommendations of an independent professional survey commissioned by the Department) they are attacked by conservationists using arguments they must know are false.

In nearly 50 years only a handful of local planning authorities have sought to bring in areas of special advertisement control, and less than half of the countryside is covered by these designations. Why? Because the majority of LPAs know they are a waste of money and time. They know also (as do all LPAs) that the general powers of the regulations give them all the controls they require to protect the countryside.

GARRY HARTLEY
Chairman
Outdoor Advertising Council
Croydon, Surrey

Places to play

Sir: Stuart Walton (25 June), expressed the anxiety of a growing number of parents and professionals concerned with the long term health and well being of our children. Of course there are dangers and children need protection. Equally, they need to explore and understand the world in which they find themselves and their own place in it. The most important way in which children find out for themselves about the physical world, and develop their own competences and understandings, is through their play.

The early founders of adventure playgrounds understood very well how to provide play environments in which children could learn to make their own assessments of risks under the sympathetic eye of a skilled adult. We seem to have lost the vision of these wonderful places for play. Adventure playgrounds should be widely available and positively promoted by all who care about children.

SANDRA MELVILLE
Director, Playlink
London SW9

Homework time

Sir: Regarding your article on using computers for homework, I disagree with the accusation that it is "cheating" to copy information directly off multimedia encyclopaedias (24 June). In most homeworks the task set is to explain and analyse, not just research information on a given topic.

Multimedia encyclopaedias are used in almost the same way as printed encyclopaedias, ie, finding basic information, with a view to analysing it. This means that less time is spent on copying out pages from encyclopaedias, and more time is spent on the actual purpose of the homework, mainly analysing and explaining it.

DAVID HALL
(Aged 12 years)
Toton, Nottingham

analysis

Truly, madly, deeply

All gurus believe madly in their own theories. But how do they entice well-educated followers? A new book by Anthony Storr tries to give us some answers, says Colin Hughes

They come with long white beards and sandals, and they come in sharp suits with shades on. They come in humble-seeming poverty, and they come trailing Rolls-Royces and Rolex watches. Sometimes, like David Koresh or Jim Jones, they turn into murderous lunatics; other times, like Jesus Christ or Sigmund Freud, they influence the lives of millions upon millions of people, arguably for the better.

Spiritual teacher-leaders come in all shapes and guises. But they are all gurus, and for that reason alone any liberal sceptic is likely to eye them warily, and from afar. The very idea of guru-dom implies a submission or subjection of individual judgement too complete to be safe, or wise.

As one follower of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh put it, in words that could come out of the mouths of innumerable other disciples: "I gradually came to realise that he knows, he has the power, that if I can only say 'yes, I leave everything to you, everything will be taken care of'."

But the power of gurus is not a power exercised over fools. George Gurdjieff, the Armenian confidence trickster whose cosmic understanding included a conviction that our lives were affected by the moon getting warmer, counted Katherine Mansfield and TS Eliot among his followers. Intelligent well-educated people turn in droves to new spiritual leaders who claim to have found the answer – or, as the Sanskrit meaning of guru would express it, to those who claim to "bring light out of darkness."

So who are they? From what fount does their influence spring? Are they all pious rascals who conjure their followers off into a promised land of grand fantasy, or is it possible that they do, in fact, bear a divinely winged message?

And if some are truly saints, while others are little better than conmen, how do we tell the one from the other?

In *Feet of Clay: A Study of Gurus*, published yesterday, Anthony Storr offers us the first good guru guide. Instead of tracking the mentality of the disciples, as many writers have done before him, Storr turns his sharp psychiatrist's light on the gurus

themselves, to find out if these immensely charismatic characters actually have a lot more in common than we think.

His central argument is that gurus are different from the rest of us, but not so different that they belong to another psychological realm. Their difference does not lie merely in the fact that they hold "eccentric views about the universe and their own significance as

The guru's single most defining characteristic is narcissism

prophets or teachers". After all, as Storr says: "Even the most rational agnostic secretly harbours beliefs which are deeply irrational, especially in areas concerned with self-esteem and love... Many of us harbour grandiose delusions that we are more important than we are."

Gurus have common characteristics. They tend to overwhelm people with rhetoric, or sheer compelling personal presence. They brook no disagreement, they need disciples to confirm their own sense of self, not friends and equals. In fact, Storr ultimately argues, a guru's single most defining characteristic is his extreme narcissism.

On the way to that conclusion, however, he shows how almost all spiritual gurus are solitary children who have passed through a period of intense personal crisis, often provoked by feelings of isolation, leading to breakdown. They resolve the crisis through a revelation, usually arrived at in private, often on a long and never wholly explained journey.

Gurdjieff travelled for a period of his late youth from which he returned with his answer, but never properly explained where he had been. Koresh underwent his depression and change after being expelled by the Seventh Day Adventists. Rajneesh was a sickly child who nearly died, and suffered extended mental illness from which he emerged "enlightened". Carl Gustav Jung was mentally ill before the First World War, when he had visions of apocalypse, and during the war too. He

emerged saying: "The years when I was pursuing my inner images were the most important in my life – in them everything essential was decided."

Ignatius Loyola (the 16th-century saint whose revelations founded the Jesuit movement) started started life as a vain, soldier-hidalgo. He underwent his crisis after being appallingly wounded in battle. He too, went through a "dark night of the soul" at Montserrat, emerging with complete confidence in his discovery of a spiritual road that leads to complete submission to God's will.

And then, of course, there is Jesus. Knowing how controversial the exercise would be, Storr half-ducks the analysis, saying that "assessing the mental state of Jesus is a futile exercise" because the Gospels make scraps of evidence; it all happened too long ago, and we do not have any idea how Jesus would really have been understood in his time.

That does not stop Storr from pointing out that Jesus shows all the other key guru characteristics. Jesus, like other gurus, needed his disciples to relinquish family ties. He probably thought the Kingdom of Heaven would arrive on Earth quite soon. "It is," says Storr, "appropriate to view the sojourn in the wilderness as another example of a period of 'creative illness'; a

The majority of mankind needs an all-embracing belief system

time of inner chaos and struggle deliberately induced by a retreat into solitude, through which conflict was resolved and from which a new vision was born."

Many people have "creative illnesses". And many people, including scientists and mathematicians, experience the feeling of suddenly and unconsciously "arriving" at a solution of a problem that they have been grappling with for months, or even years. Storr recognises that this impulse, the need to resolve doubt and confusion, drives some of mankind's most creative achievements. He also accepts that some insights

gained through such intense "prayer" might be genuinely revelatory. But, while Einstein might "arrive" – eureka – at the provable theory of relativity, so another scientist might "arrive" at a solution that proves on analysis to be wrong. Just because gurus see a light, it does not necessarily shine on the truth. They may be gifted; or they may be stone-cold crazy.

"Gurus go through a period of intense stress or mental illness, and come out on the other side with what generally amounts to a delusional system which, because of their lack of friends with whom ideas could be discussed on equal terms, is elaborated in solitude... They then seek disciples. Acquiring disciples who wholeheartedly embrace the guru's system of ideas is the final proof of his superiority... Confidence tricksters are convincing because they have come to believe in their own fictions. Gurus are convincing because they appear sure that they are right."

Not all gurus dominate, nor do they all end up persuading their followers to commit mass suicide. But they do, according to Storr, all have a sense of overwhelming conviction that the complete solution they have found to their own distress is, in fact, a solution to everyone's distress.

Even Freud treated his ostensibly scientific "findings" as a personal revelation, and accused those who disagreed with him of being "heretics". Jung believed that he understood things which others knew nothing of: it is, Jung said, "important to have a secret, a premonition of things unknown."

So how do we tell when a guru has something to offer, and when he is dazzling us with madness? The fact that someone holds bizarre beliefs is not enough to strike them out, says Storr: "Religious faith is an answer to the problem of life, not to a series of intellectual puzzles or artistic dilemmas... The majority of mankind wants or needs some all-embracing belief system which purports to provide an answer to life's mysteries, and are not necessarily dismayed by the discovery that their belief system, which they proclaim as 'the truth', is incompatible with the beliefs of other people. One man's faith is another man's delusion."

So a barminess test won't work. Instead, says Storr, we should distrust "characters who are both deeply self-absorbed and also authoritarian", because "the charisma of certainty is a snare which entraps the child who is latent in us all". It is a straightforward, and in some ways obvious conclusion – yet little of the burgeoning literature of new religion has arrived at such simple understanding.

'Feet of Clay: A Study of Gurus', by Anthony Storr (Harper-Collins, £18).

GURU GUIDE



BHAGWAN SHREE RAJNEESH
Indian mystic taken up by middle-class youth in the 1970s. Like many gurus, Rajneesh started on a road of good intent, and had some (to some people) useful ideas: loving yourself, saying "yes" to life, loosening inhibitions (particularly sexual). But he ended up watching films like Patton and The Ten Commandments all day, collected 93 Rolls-Royces, inflicted terrible privations on his orange-dressed sanyassin followers at his various astram communities. Storr says: "Rajneesh descended into a monster of greed... arrogant... and inflated with his own importance."

FREUD
Freud (above) developed a theory of the mind largely from his own self-analysis, which is why, according to Storr, "Freud was certain that they were valid". He gave humanity many central psychoanalytic ideas, including the Oedipus complex, a theory of dreams, and the concepts of ego, super-ego and id. Says Storr: "Although Freud continued to proclaim that psychoanalysis was a science, psychoanalysis became a movement which more closely resembled a secular religion." However, he adds, "his influence on the way we think about ourselves has, on the whole, been beneficial".

JUNG
Jung (below) broke with Freud largely because he could not accept Freud's almost exclusive emphasis on the importance of sex. He also did not believe human problems could be treated in a purely scientific way. He developed a theory of the unconscious, of symbolic archetypes, and the notions of extrovert and introverted personality types. Storr says: "Some of his beliefs bordered on delusion; but his period of mental illness opened doors of perception which are closed to normal people."



JESUS
Storr says: "Perceiving Jesus as one example amongst many gurus actually emphasises his unique qualities; but those who regard him as their saviour may think this approach irreverent. It is important to remember that Jesus was not a Christian." Storr says: "In 20th-century England, an individual announcing that he was the son of God and would return after death in glory would probably attract psychiatric attention, but earlier generations might have regarded such claims as unsurprising." However, Storr concludes that: "Few subsequent gurus seem to have matched the simplicity and directness of Jesus's message."



DAVID KORESH
Koresh (above) started life as Vernon Howell, son of a 14-year-old girl. Developed Branch Davidian breakaway from Seventh Day Adventists, basing its belief on the idea that God would return to earth and establish a new kingdom in Israel with Koresh on the throne. Subjected his followers to beatings and 15-hour harangues, as well as sex with any women (and girls) he chose. Besieged by the FBI at his Ranch Apocalypse near Waco, Texas, ending in a self-inflicted fire and suicide shootings which killed most of the group.

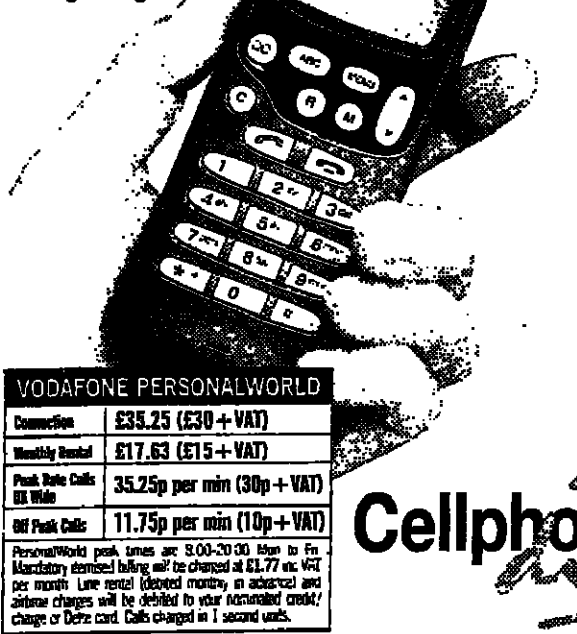
JIM JONES
Jones (below) caused the mass suicide of more than 900 of his followers, at Jonestown, Guyana. He started out in Indiana as a "socialist worker God" (as opposed to what he called the "sky God"), and recruited many of his followers among black people who responded to his rejection of racial superiority. He sexually abused male and female disciples, and subjected them to concentration camp conditions when he finally went crazy. Storr concludes that these "evil madmen... exhibited in exaggerated form... all the worst possible characteristics of gurus."



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A man of many letters



Myles Kingdon

I have been thinking rather uneasily recently of a trick I once played on someone, and wondering what exactly my ethical situation is in the wake of that event.

It happened some years ago when I was at the Belfast Festival, playing in a concert, and had gone to a party afterwards. Belfast parties seem to be different from parties elsewhere. They are more – well, party-like. And at this party I met a lawyer, a local man, a very funny and congenial local man, who held some position of importance.

(As far as the law is concerned, that is. You and I, not being lawyers, never know if lawyers are important or not. We don't know what a QC is or what silk is, or even who the Lord High Chief Justice is, or what it means, and whenever a lawyer is said to be of some importance, that means only that he is of importance to other lawyers.)

So anyway, I got talking to this very funny and convivial lawyer, who was either a big Catholic or Protestant, but I forgot to ask him which, nor

does it matter, and somewhere along the line he mentioned that he had once written a letter to Anthony Powell and got a nice answer back.

Why he had done this, I don't know. How we even got on to the subject I don't know, because I had never read anything by A Powell (still haven't) but I can still remember being impressed by the fact that this young whipper-snapper of a lawyer had got a letter from an old codger of an author like Powell. I mean, anyone can write a letter to A Powell, but you have to have certain qualities to get an answer back from a gent like A Powell.

Juvenile cheek is a quality that always works, of course. I remember a young man who, 20 or more years ago, wrote to all the famous novelists he could think of who were still alive, asking for advice on how to be a successful novelist. Quite a few wrote back to him, including Graham Greene and Somerset Maugham, all offering tips and wisdom.

I know this, because when the young man had received enough answers, he didn't sit down and write a novel based on the advice he had received – he sent all the answers to a Sunday paper, the *Sunday Times* I think, where they appeared in a feature called something like "How to Write a Great Novel, by the Masters".

I don't suppose the young man ever sent any of the profits he derived from this feature to the great novelists he had used. Nor do I suppose he ever settled down and wrote a novel. The fact that he sent all those celebrity replies to a newspaper marked him out as a

future journalist, not a future novelist.

But to come back to my Irish lawyer. When I got back to England, I decided to write a letter to him to say thank you for all his hospitality, but because he had been such fun, I decided to write a silly letter. In fact, I wrote a letter to him purporting to be from Anthony Powell himself. It went somewhat along these lines...

"Dear Irish lawyer, You may remember some time ago that I wrote you a letter in answer to your kind inquiry. I wonder now if you could kindly let me have it back? The fact is that in my old age I have recently run into money problems and have been advised that publishing my selected letters would make me a few quick, much-needed bob. Rashly, however, I kept copies of very few of the letters I have written, including yours. Therefore I wonder if I could prevail on you to let me have my previous missive back?"

I cannot remember now which address I used to write

this letter. Did I write it from Powell's agent? His publisher? Or from his real home address in Somerset, which is listed in *Who's Who*? It had to sound authentic, or otherwise the Irish lawyer would never believe it. But if he did believe it, I would never know about it. He may well have sent the letter back to a puzzled Powell, or he may have ignored it totally. Either way, he never got in touch with me again.

And the ethical problem? Well, it's like this. I've had a few money problems recently. Nothing serious, of course. It's just that if I don't raise a few bob fairly soon, the creditors will be forming an orderly queue at the back door. So I've had the idea of issuing a small volume of selected letters of mine. Including the one pretending to come from Anthony Powell.

Unfortunately, I can't find a copy of the original. Do you think I am justified in writing to the Irish lawyer asking him to let me have my Anthony Powell letter back again?

مكتبة الادب

the commentators

She didn't lose the plot, she became it

A thriller author's life can have more bizarre twists than any of her characters, writes Rebecca Fowler

From the outset it had blockbusting written across it. A glamorous novelist attends an FBI training academy in the United States to research her next book. There she meets a dashing expert in hostage negotiation. Romance blossoms, a husband is spurned, jealousy grips him, shots are fired....

But the recent events in the life of Patricia Cornwell, the fabulously wealthy American crime writer who has signed a £16m deal for her next three forensic thrillers, are also a vivid example of the time-honoured tradition by which a writer's own life becomes more dramatic than his or her fiction.

It is a modern tale of passion brimming with intrigue: the FBI backdrop; a smattering of sex, madness and religion; the self-made heroine with homes across the world; and the twist when it emerges that Cornwell's lover is in fact a woman, Marguerite Bennett.

But as Eugene Bennett,

Marguerite's husband and also a former FBI agent, was led off to prison following a shoot-out in his local church last weekend, it also emerged as a sobering tale of how real life can descend to levels of tragedy which, if found in a book, would cause it to be tossed aside as way beyond fantasy.

So how did it begin? The story opens with Patricia Cornwell, elegantly dressed in clothes picked out for her by her personal shopper at Bergdorf Goodman in New York, arriving at the FBI's Quantico Academy in Virginia. Among the most knowledgeable FBI agents at the academy was Mrs Bennett, who soon became an invaluable source of information for Ms Cornwell's research. The writer is famous for her assiduous attention to detail in her best-selling books, including *Post Mortem*, which portray a dark

world of crime through the eyes of her heroine, a forensic expert called Kay Scarpetta. Research turned into candle-lit dinners, but it was not long before Mr Bennett's own training caused him to smell a rat. As his suspicions deepened, Mr Bennett decided to trail his wife and Ms Cornwell, a divorcee, on their local trysts. Sure enough, according to the divorce papers filed last weekend, he spied them "kissing and cuddling in cars". When he discovered some lingerie and lesbian literature in the family's van, he was told by his wife that lesbian romance was a regular feature of life at the FBI academy.

Ms Cornwell was well placed to take centre stage in the latest literary dangerous liaison. Only a few years ago her debts were piling up, and she was sleeping on the floor of an unfurnished apartment after



'Post Mortem' and its author, Patricia Cornwell



her husband, a literature professor, left her behind with three unpublished novels. Now, after the publication of her first prize-winning novel in 1991, she drives a Mercedes, has her own staff, and is known as "Patsy" to her adoring fans worldwide.

But it was a tragic blow for Mr Bennett who was driven into a fit of angry brooding over his marriage and there were a series of stormy rows with his wife. They split formally in 1993 after Mrs Bennett accused him of stealing \$17,000 from the FBI.

Ms Cornwell is the most recent in a long line of writers

whose lives have been touched by violence and drama. Lord Byron died of a fever in Greece, where he is revered as a flamboyant revolutionary who helped fight off the Turks; Christopher Marlowe, the Elizabethan playwright, was stabbed to death as a spy in Deptford; and Salman Rushdie will be remembered as much for Islam's death threat against him as for his novels.

The romantic lives of writers have been equally dramatic. Lord Byron stomped over a trail of broken hearts before his own demise: Ernest Hemingway and Jean Paul Sartre left behind too many infidelities to follow; George Eliot enjoyed an enduring extra-marital affair while Oscar Wilde's pursuit of the love that dare not speak its name drove him to an early grave.

Showing once again that life is far messier than even the most

gripping thriller, the Cornwell-Bennett saga came to a dramatic climax last Sunday, when the Bennetts came together for a shoot-out at the Prince of Peace Church in a local suburb.

Eugene Bennett was by now, according to his lawyer, driven by a malevolent alter-ego known to him as Ed. He allegedly abducted the minister, Edwin Clure, placed plastic packaging around him, which he claimed were explosives, and forced him at gun-point to lure his wife there by telephone. Mrs Bennett, convinced something was amiss, put a pistol in her handbag.

She slipped into the church by the back door and shot over the minister at her masked husband. He fled unhurt to consult a four-hour siege from his home, claiming afterwards that only when he "was able to lock Ed in the garage" could he surrender to police.

It has been a harrowing time for all those involved, not least Ms Cornwell. Even the high-tech security systems guarding her homes in Mayfair, Virginia, the Caribbean, cannot prevent her feeling vulnerable, according to aides.

For a writer nothing could be more confusing than watching her life become larger than her art. In a recent interview when she was asked to compare herself to her heroine, Cornwell said: "Her spirit is mine; we are both fighters, driven professionals who find relationships difficult." She went on to say: "The only difference is that I'm not having an exciting affair like she is."

Whether Ms Cornwell had genuinely forgotten where real life ends and fiction begins only she knows. But whatever the ending of her own drama, in the tale of the author who did not so much lose the plot as become it, one thing is assured: the ending will not be as neat as in the book.

Can we still afford holidays?

Europeans take plenty of time off while the rest of the world carries on working. Perhaps not for much longer...

Strikes on the post and the Tube, then the football - a relief that it is nearly holiday time, something to look forward to.

It has become normal for most Europeans, certainly those in white-collar jobs, to get five or six weeks of paid holiday each year; in the education industry it is more. It seems so normal that it is hard to appreciate that by the standards of the rest of the world, and by the standards of our own recent past, the European holiday pattern is very unusual.



HAMISH McRAE

In the United States, two weeks is still the norm, three weeks after a few years' service; in Japan they get two weeks, but don't dare take it. True, in the US there are conventions and other forms of business travel to compensate; in Japan, the whole firm or division might take a three-day break in Hawaii, paid for by the company. But for real holiday time, Europe is unique.

This is all very recent. Schoolteachers and university lecturers always had long holidays, and the French have always taken August off. But go back to the Sixties and the European patterns were much closer to the US: two weeks, maybe three. A giant industry has developed in Europe, creating services for people to buy during their time off: package holidays are proportionately much larger here than in the US or Japan.

This raises two obvious questions. Why did Europe, unlike the rest of the world, extend its holidays? And in view of the

globalisation of the world economy, can it continue to enjoy this particular luxury?

The answer to the first is partly tax. The shift to leisure took place in the Sixties and Seventies, when marginal taxes in Europe on earned income were particularly high. So it made more sense for employees to take their rewards not in more money, but in more time off.

But it cannot just be tax, for marginal tax rates have tended to come down in Europe, but holidays have not. For, having got a taste of the joys of leisure, we are loath to give them up.

Everywhere in the world there are people who make the explicit choice in favour of leisure: they would rather have a lower material standard of living, but have a bit more time to themselves. But they make this choice in different ways in different economic regions.

In Europe, it is possible to opt for more leisure while remaining within the full-time job market. People take their full holiday allowance, and maybe negotiate a longer period of unpaid leave on top. In the US, that is much harder, so the usual pattern is for people to leave their jobs, take some time off filling in with part-time work, and then maybe re-enter the job market at some later stage. (In Japan it is the wife who leaves the job when she gets married - the Japanese compensate for the long hours worked by men by having relatively few hours worked by women.)

Of the three patterns, it seems to me that the European model is the most satisfactory in that it best matches different individual preferences between work and leisure. Europeans who want more work (and money) and are prepared to sacrifice leisure can take second jobs, whereas Americans or Japanese who want more leisure probably have to step out of the job market. At least



Europeans may fewer breaks on the beaches of Vietnam and more Asians may come here

Photograph: Reuters

in the US there is a flexible demand for part-timers, whereas in Japan that is much tougher. There is a powerful argument for rebalancing the European tax system to reduce the tax wedge between employer and employee, in order to cut continental levels of unemployment. But the European holiday system works rather well.

But is it sustainable? Can we carry on with our long holidays when everywhere else in the world holidays are much shorter?

There is, however, a difference between theory and practice. If European living standards fall materially below those of other developed regions in the world, including the "new" nations in East Asia, we may choose to cut down both spending and time on holidays in order to maintain the

rest of our lifestyles. There would be fewer rich Europeans going to the beaches of Phuket for glamorous fortnights; more rich Asians coming here to play on our golf courses.

In any case, Europe faces a squeeze over the next generation - not just from competition from North America, Japan and the rest of East Asia. Even without that we would be hard-pressed from the change in our demography: more pensioners, and fewer workers to support them. Against that headwind it is going to be tough to maintain living standards, let alone increase them.

It is possible that we may look back on the Eighties and Nineties as a golden age, at least as far as holidays are concerned. Maybe in another 20 years, we will be back to three weeks holiday. More likely, though, there will be a

blurring of the set holiday allowance. Instead of everyone getting the same deal, employers will offer their staff a choice between pay and time off. Some people will choose more work (and more pay) and take less time off; others will make the opposite choice.

This is a part of an even bigger change at the workplace. Everywhere firms are trying to do two things: match pay to performance, and fit work contracts to individual desires. A flexible holiday allowance is just one part of this seismic shift.

We are not all the same. Our long holidays have taught us something about the need for balance in our lives. At some stages of life, people need a lot of time to themselves; at others, they need the folding money. And the last thing we want to do is have the US or Japanese systems imposed on us.

Forget the match, give me the goals

Why sit through 90 minutes, David Lister asks, when the shoot-out captures it all?

Not since Russian Roulette was faddish at the turn of the century has there been a sporting event of such consummate skill and artistry.

Forget the match. Why sit through two hours for just two goals, when you can have 11 in a couple of minutes?

I delight in the penalty shoot-out. Kipling would have relished its infernal symmetry. It pits man against man, triumph against disaster, makes an instant god of a goalkeeper for guessing right on a 50-50 chance, and guarantees the most miserable summer imaginable to the poor chap in front of him who guessed wrong.

Heroism and humiliation: the twin pillars of spectator sport. Forget the tawdriness of national pride, jingoism and sense of identity bringing the nation together around the television sets. It was the anticipation and excitement of the penalty shoot-out that, adrenalin-pumping, knicker-wetting, arguably even sexually charged climax - and all in the time it takes a kettle to boil.

"Oh, I do hope it doesn't go to penalties," was the mantra that echoed through every household on Wednesday night. Never in the history of association football have so many people lied so solemnly to themselves.

The mesmerising effect of

the penalty shoot-out is the most obvious, though not the only, manifestation of high-speed sport. There is the tie-break in tennis, an absorbing, nail-biting and deliciously gratuitous and unjust way to finish a set. It hasn't taken long for the authorities to realise that the tie-break is inevitably more interesting than the 12 games that precede it. Some tennis clubs already run tie-break tournaments for children. The penalty shoot-out European championship cannot be far behind.

With luck no sport will be able to remain immune. Pensioners will snarl at each other, false teeth chattering, as a new rule gives them one final bowl to decide the match. There will be snooker halls where the only colour is the black, the rest discarded to save time. Boxing matches will start in the 15th round and continue till the final knockout - the "golden glove". Girls will weep inconsolably after the lacrosse lunge-out.

Alan Hansen on the BBC described one of the penalty shoot-outs as "pure theatre". It is, of course, something much more important than that. It is pure television. It gives sports producers undreamt of scope for the zoom shots of faces contorted with ecstasy or, even better, grief. Sport has at last discovered the 30-second cut. There is no turning back.

So, farewell my Westminster ...

By Stephen Haseler

This week's skirmish between John Major and Tony Blair over Scottish devolution is yet another sign that the constitution is now firmly on the political agenda, even on the election agenda. Yet, while Westminster's politicians talk of reforms and solutions, in truth it is they themselves who are the problem.

Like the Tories, Tony Blair's new Labour Party is a child of Westminster, and has a decided interest in protecting its inheritance. After all, it has been content to inhabit the most centralised political system in the western world. Its devolution proposals - with or without a referendum - are not aimed at creating a modern federal state in Britain, but rather at appeasing the rebellious Scots in order to 'save the union' and continue to locate 'sovereignty' in London.

As well as saving the union, our politicians seem determined to retain the unconstructed parliamentary system. Major and Blair may tinker around with the rules of the Westminster Club, with Question Time or the hours of sitting, but they have no plans to reduce the outrageously high number of legislators - now nearly 2,000. The House of Commons itself

now numbers 650 - and this for a nation of just over 50 million, compared with the US lower house of 435 for a nation over five times the size. Sir Edward Heath's sensible suggestion that the number of MPs be cut by a half is radical talk, very near the knuckle for Westminster's political class.

Nor is much change scheduled for the upper house. Major, with his built-in party majority, wants no change at all; and Labour's much-trumpeted Lords reform - whereby the hereditary peers can no longer vote - is essentially cosmetic and marginal. An incoming Blair government would keep all the life peers, indeed make more, thus creating an even more hush system of patronage in the hands of Westminster's party leaders.

Thus, the beloved 'Mother of Parliaments' will remain a tame legislature, hardly worth the name, through which Britain's executive-driven state, neither properly overseen nor investigated, rides like a coach and horses.

The key to unlocking real constitutional change remains electoral reform. But party politicians, despite their flirtatious statements to the contrary, simply cannot deliver it. After

all, to introduce proportional representation would mean giving up the possibility of winning the 'great prize': all the ministries and all the patronage (and if you're Mrs Thatcher an economic revolution too) - all on the basis of 42 per cent of the vote!

With 'the efficient' part of the constitution essentially unreformed, the so-called 'dignified' part - the tourist-trap constitutional flummery - also seems set to remain well into the next century. Although some of their backbenchers are restive, not one leading politician seems to want to tackle the question of monarchy.

So, whether the reigns of power are held by Major or Blair, or Blair and Ashdown together, Ukania - that poignant term invented by Tom Nairn in his classic republican text, *The Enchanted Glass*, to describe the Westminster UK-state - will remain the essentially unconstructed and unwritten *ancien regime* it has always been.

Yet, outside of Westminster the pressures for constitutional change are building. Globalisation, our less def-

erential society, our insistent need for information, our growing ethnic and regional pluralism, the Irish and Scottish problems - all conspire to demand a serious refashioning of our institutions.

And if the Westminster political class cannot deliver this change, it will happen anyway. The question for reformers is how?

Well, as it happens, help is at hand - although this particular deliverance will not be good news for Europhobes. The fact is that the European Union may provide the modern constitution that our own political class continues to deny us.

It provides a written document - in the form of the Euro treaties and their coming amendments. It will establish a clear separation of powers, not only between the Euro institutions but between Brussels, Strasbourg and London. And through a European framework, we British, for the very first time in our history, will be able to appeal to what amounts to a supreme court, which, over time, like its US counterpart can build up a regime of rights.

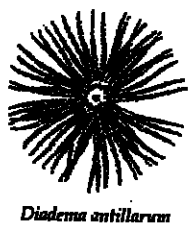
Europe may also act as a forcing-house for real federalism at home. The

sad fact, for Ukanians, is that the UK (like Germany, France and Italy) is both too small and too big. It is too small an arena for the big decisions (trade, foreign policy and defence are properly Europe's domain). Yet it is too big for democracy; for, clearly, the nations, regions and localities are much nearer than Westminster to the people.

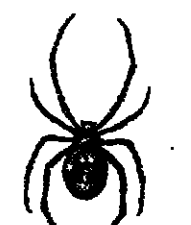
In the new Europe, health, education and welfare, and perhaps justice, are the only things left for Westminster to do - and these functions could easily be carried out by the nations and regions of Britain.

And here lies the nub of the hostility of our political class both to constitutional change and to Europe. Frankly, it's not really anything as elevated as the ideology of Euroscepticism. Rather, it's the age-old resistance to change of a vested interest - a question of fending off the redundancy notices. Yet the question 'what exactly do we need Westminster for?' is one which is set to become more and more insistent.

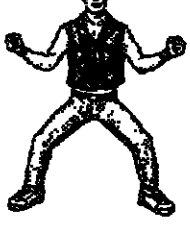
Stephen Haseler's latest book is *The English Tribe, Nation and Europe*, published last month by Macmillan.



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(Long-Spined Urchin)



Latrodectus mactans
(Black Widow Spider)



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Walter Govears Aztec politician.
died La Paz, Bolivia 20 June, aged 84. A leader of the 1952 revolution that nationalised Bolivia's mines and brought universal suffrage and land reform.
President of Bolivia for 85 days in 1979 until removed in a coup.
George Barati, composer and conductor, died San Jose, California 21 June, aged 83. Conducted the Honolulu Symphony and *Opera 1950-68* and during the 1970s directed the Santa Cruz County Symphony. Played in a string quartet with Albert Einstein at Princeton University.
Sir Quinton Hazell, businessman, died Bedford, Warwickshire 24 June, aged 75. In 1946 founded Quinton Hazell, which broke the British motor industry's cartel on spare parts.
John Smeaton, juries trainer, died Gillingham, Kent 19 June, aged 88. Smeaton includes the 1960 Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham, with Another Flash.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

Contract repudiation accepted by inaction

LAW REPORT

28 June 1996

all depended on the particular contractual relationship and the particular circumstances.

Paul Magrath Responds

Paul Magrath, Barrister

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CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

Asda steps up price war with new pharmacies

NIGEL COPE

Asda stepped up its campaign for cheaper basic healthcare products yesterday when it announced it was buying 10 pharmacies that would be added to Asda stores. The deals mean Asda will have pharmacies in half its 207 outlets, all of which will stock the cheaper Asda brand of vitamins, minerals and paracetamol.

The announcement came as Asda unveiled a 24 per cent increase in profits to £304m and said it was still undecided on the launch of a nationwide loyalty card. Asda has been testing a

card in 18 stores for more than a year but is now the only one of the big four chains without a nationwide scheme.

Asda chief executive Archie Norman said the company had the technology to launch a card but had not decided whether or when to strike. "I'm not interested in putting prices up today just to give someone vouchers in three months time," he said. "But we do recognise that loyalty cards have something to offer. Their day will come."

Mr Norman said Asda would continue its campaign against resale price maintenance on non-prescription medicines in

spite of opposition from smaller pharmacists who say independent operators may be forced out of business. "We calculate that this is costing the British public some £300m per annum and that 80 per cent of this goes in excess margin to major suppliers and multiple retailers."

After successfully attacking the Net Book Agreement which collapsed last year, Mr Norman said the company would seek other areas where Asda could offer lower prices. Though the company would not be drawn on its next area of attack, it refused to rule out that

compact discs may be a target. Asda revealed that its book sales had increased by 50 per cent since the collapse of the NBA. Its entertainment sales, which include compact discs, have now reached £100m. Asda now claims it is the UK's fifth largest entertainment retailer, just behind WH Smith.

Asda's profit figures mark the beginning of Asda's like-for-like sales improved by 12 per cent last year, the best performance in the sector. With growth rates like these, the management question whether a loyalty card is necessary. Mr Norman said that demand was slightly higher

and that the trend was expected to continue through the year. "There is more cash around in the household budget."

Asda's meat sales increased in spite of BSE though petrol profits were dented by the price war. Gross margins were reduced by just under 0.5 per cent to help drive sales. A similar reduction is expected this year. Apart from petrol where the price war has stripped away almost all of Asda's fuel profits, other disappointing areas included the clothing range where buying mistakes and the weather led to disappointing

first-half sales. However, the company still intends to make the George brand second only to Marks & Spencer in terms of sales.

Asda plans to add eight new supermarkets this year, compared with the previous year's seven. The expansion should add another 3,000-4,000 jobs to the current army of 75,000. Asda hopes to replace its card-based "clocking on" system with a swipe card equivalent that will be more accurate and efficient.

Asda has invested £24m in a planned £70m investment in new technology. This includes sales-based ordering which

has been introduced to 19 stores so far.

The share option scheme will be extended to another 10,000 staff, taking the total to 41,000. Asda also plans to increase the penetration of its own brand from 34 per cent to 40 per cent of total sales by 1998. In 1995/96, 2,000 own-brand products were launched, a new range of fruit juices is the next to be added.

Group sales increased from £5.7m to £6.5m. The dividend was increased by 20 per cent to 2.65p. Asda shares closed 4p down at 114p.

Comment, page 21



Archie Norman: Looking for new areas to cut costs in

Warning to shareholders: 'If we don't reach agreement by the end of July then we never will'

Eurotunnel debt crisis could lead to collapse

IAN PHILLIPS
Paris
and PETER RODGERS

The crisis at Eurotunnel escalated yesterday when Patrick Ponsolle, co-chairman, warned that the company could collapse if there were no breakthrough in talks with its creditor banks by the end of July.

He told 1,500 investors at a rowdy annual shareholders meeting in Paris: "If we don't reach an agreement by the end of July, then we never will."

If the company were to go into receivership there would be no precedents for working under conflicting French and British insolvency procedures. The debt talks were "complicated, long and extremely difficult".

Mr Ponsolle's comments are likely to alarm shareholders, after leaks in recent weeks appeared to show the beginning of progress in talks over restructuring the company's £8bn debt.

Until recently, Mr Ponsolle had held out the possibility - though never a firm promise -

of an announcement of a deal at the annual meeting.

Eurotunnel has been in crisis since it suspended payment of interest on its debts last September and Mr Ponsolle said that the interest incurred by the company was "excessive".

If it increased, the situation would be disastrous not only for the shareholders but also for the banks who will never recover their money.

He said that an agreement had been reached in principle on a number of aspects of the negotiations, including a debt for equity swap and the reduction of the rate of interest on the original debt. But there remained a number of important sticking points.

These included the pace of the conversion of the debt into shares, the date of the first dividend, and the payment profile afterwards.

But Eurotunnel gave no detail, angering shareholders who shouted: "We don't give a damn. We want to know about the banks," after directors had given details of passenger and



Angry throng: Shareholders at yesterday's annual meeting in Paris called the directors 'incapable and thieves'

revenue figures earlier in the meeting.

Mr Ponsolle stressed that the shareholders would have to be patient. "I cannot get the company back on track in two years' time," he admitted, "and we have set an objective for a first dividend in 2004." Before the meeting began shareholders outside started banging their fists on tables and calling the company's directors "incapable and thieves".

Soothing music which greeted the shareholders' arrival at

the Palais de Congress did nothing to defuse the atmosphere. Mr Ponsolle's opening words were met with boos and members of the assembly regularly tried to interrupt the proceedings. There were screaming matches between shareholders. After Mr Ponsolle's speech, Sophie L'Hélias, the corporate governance consultant appointed by the French *Investir* magazine to represent 17,000 shareholders, accused the board of conflicts of interest. She also brought into ques-

tion directors' salaries and called for somebody outside the company to replace the British co-president, Sir Alistair Morton, who plans to retire once the negotiations with the banks are concluded.

Danielle Jann, a 54-year-old holder of 6,400 shares, said: "I just hope the banks leave us with a little money."

However, Mr Ponsolle tried to reassure them by announcing that his first priority was that "the shares remain in the hands of the present shareholders".

He added that the banks contractual "right of substitution", which would allow them to scoop up all the shares in the company because of its inability to pay off the interest on the debt, was no longer valid and that "it only existed during the construction stage".

He said the French and British governments shared responsibility for the excessive construction and operating costs, and he highlighted the delay in their building of a high-speed line on the English side.

Wickes launches investigation

PATRICK TOOHER

A formal investigation was begun yesterday by accountants Price Waterhouse and law firm Linklaters & Paines to the serious accounting problems unearthed at Wickes, the troubled do-it-yourself retailer whose £1m-a-year boss resigned abruptly earlier this week.

Wickes said it had traced the accountancy errors to a small group of employees who had "elaborately disguised" their actions over a number of years.

Legal action against them was "one option being considered, but a preliminary investigation

had found no evidence to link former Wickes chairman and chief executive Henry Sweetbaum to the problems, said a source close to the company.

Many staff will be interviewed by the investigators, including Mr Sweetbaum and former finance director Trevor Llewellyn, now at building materials group Caradon.

The cost of the errors, described by Wickes' finance director Stuart Stradling as "deliberately misleading" and "going back at least three years, is likely to wipe more than £10m from last year's profits. The developments mean in-

vestors will not get their 1.5p final dividend due next week. Mr Stradling also revealed that the accounting problems relate to payments made by suppliers to Wickes linked to support for advertising, store openings and payments from a new supplier replacing another.

"It all relates to the timing of these payments. There is no evidence that they will not eventually be recovered," he said. Wickes hopes to quantify the losses by the end of next week when trading in the shares, which were suspended on Tuesday, may also be resumed.

The Serious Fraud Office

has not yet been asked to investigate, and the Department of Trade and Industry declined to comment on the case.

Wickes has also begun the hunt for a new chief executive and a new finance director as Mr Stradling intends to resign once the internal inquiry is completed. Meanwhile, Michael von Brentano becomes the new non-executive chairman, with Robert Burrow taking on the deputy chairman's role.

Mr Sweetbaum succumbed to intense pressure from institutional shareholders by resigning late Wednesday as chairman and chief executive of Wickes.

Ban on ITV teletext adverts sparks row

MATTHEW HORSMAN
Media Editor

A serious row threatened to erupt last night between the Government and the country's ITV companies over a controversial amendment to the Broadcasting Bill covering teletext services.

According to sources at three leading broadcasters, the Government did not consult the industry before tabling an amendment that would prevent ITV franchise holders from selling any teletext advertising space in their regions.

"This is directly against the guidelines that the Independent Television Commission laid down just a year ago," fumed a senior ITV broadcaster, who said his company had invested in new equipment to allow it to offer regional advertisers space on its own teletext pages.

The amendment would have the effect of protecting the near-monopoly of the national teletext company, Teletext, which is controlled by Associated Newspapers, the publishers of the *Mail* and the *Mail on Sunday*.

ITV sources suggested last night that the Government had bowed to political pressure from Associated in advance of an election. "They must be pretty desperate to win votes," one ITV chief executive said.

Peter van Gelder, chief executive of Teletext, said last night: "We are grateful that there has been a clarification about what the ITV companies may do. The Government initially intended that the companies operate text services in support of their programmes, not that they would take advertising."

At least three companies - HTV, Scottish and Central - have complained about the amendment, and have written to Virginia Bottomley, Secretary of State for National Heritage, asking her to reconsider. Leslie Hill, chairman of the ITV Association, is also believed to have written to the Government.

The ITV companies say they can provide a regional or even sub-regional teletext service, directly tailored to the needs of local advertisers.

Most offer a package of advertising space, including on-air and text pages, and see the teletext service as an important marketing tool.

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Fleming weighs in against Deutsche

PETER RODGERS
Financial Editor

Robert Fleming, the merchant bank, added its voice yesterday to critics of Deutsche Morgan Grenfell itself. "There is always someone who wants to expand in a hurry," he said.

Mr Manser said his bank had been able to resist the pressure and its salaries, and bonus payments were not out of line with past experience.

Reporting profits before tax at Robert Fleming down to £133.5m from £171.9m last

year, Mr Manser said the bank's overall costs, two-thirds of which were to pay for staff, had risen 11 per cent. But this was after a 5 per cent increase in staff as the bank expanded.

Staff numbers have risen from 4,200 to 7,200 in three years and new offices have been opened in 16 countries. Fleming has also entered new businesses areas and invested heavily in expanding its equity research and dealing operations.

Mr Manser said: "All this has been expensive. The cost of opening new offices, recruitment and training is high. Inevitably costs rise in advance of earnings and this has been reflected in two years of falling profits."

But the period of maximum investment strain was over and the company was reaping the rewards. Profits in the last three months were substantially higher than a year earlier.

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STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
FTSE 100	3678.80	-15.70	-0.5	3857.10	3630.50
FTSE 250	4940.80	-24.40	-0.5	4968.60	4915.30
FTSE 350	1857.10	-8.90	-0.5	1945.40	1816.60
FT Small Cap	2155.97	-15.09	-0.7	2244.36	1954.06
FT All Share	1843.91	-9.33	-0.5	1924.17	1791.95
New York	5652.04	-30.66	-0.5	5778.00	5332.94
Nikkei	22501.61	-105.19	-0.5	22666.00	19734.70
Dax	11002.45	-51.47	-0.5	11584.99	10204.87
Frankfurt	2551.02	-22.07	-0.9	2573.69	2253.26

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
Short sterling	5.81	5.75	8.01	8.49	8.12
UK medium gilt	5.41	6.13	6.91	6.26	7.05
US long bond	0.44	1.10	3.24	2.60	-
Germany	3.31	3.60	6.61	6.92	7.16

CURRENCIES					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
£/\$	1.5480	+0.25c	1.5888	1.5480	1.5888
£/¥	1.5405	-0.53p	1.5893	1.5405	1.5893
DM/\$	2.3526	-0.53p	2.3096	2.3526	2.3096
¥/£	168.965	+0.03	135.273	168.965	135.273
DM/£	85.9	unch	83.4	85.9	83.4

OTHER INDICATORS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1996 High	1996 Low
Oil Brent \$	19.02	+0.8	16.51	19.02	16.51
Gold \$	383.20	-0.3	378.90	383.20	378.90
Gold £	247.83	-0.69	244.18	247.83	244.18

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20

business

Rank shares slide on downbeat trading statement

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Rank's new chief executive Andrew Teare poured cold water yesterday on over-optimistic expectations for consumer spending this year. The tone of the traditional first-half trading statement from Britain's biggest leisure company caught investors on the hop and Rank's shares closed 33p lower at 498p.

Describing trading in the first five months only as "satisfactory", Mr Teare's comments jured against his predecessor's Michael Gifford, confident valedictory forecast in February that "prospects for the future hold considerable promise".

Mr Teare is understood to be unwilling to raise his head above the parapet until he has had a chance to properly review all of Rank's varied film, leisure and holiday operations. With no experience in the leisure world, having previously worked in minerals, chemicals and cement businesses, his appointment was greeted by scepticism in some quarters.

He inherits a business that has been likened to a super-tanker with a £1.25bn capital expenditure programme, much

of it defensive spending to help Rank catch up with smaller rivals.

Worst hit in the first half was the film and television division where lower video prices had undone much of the benefit of higher demand from Hollywood studios, the operation's biggest customers. Andrew Hunter, an analyst at ABN Amro Hoare Govett, said: "Most people were expecting slightly better trading news."

Another analyst commented: "Given the fact that we were looking for a strong improvement in consumer spending to benefit Rank, the report was a little downbeat."

During the first five months to the beginning of June, Rank said, sales at constant exchange rates had risen by 6 per cent. Profits, however, were only marginally better once a one-off £15m profit, struck from recovered research and development costs in an engineering subsidiary, were stripped out.

Elsewhere revenues from Rank's minority interest in Rank Xerox, the office equipment business, increased thanks to currency swings, but were 2 per cent lower on an underlying basis compared with a

strong first-quarter last year. France, Germany and Russia dragged the group down and restructuring costs led to an 11 per cent decline in total profits attributable to Rank.

In Recreation, which includes most of Rank's UK leisure activities, casinos and the Odeon cinema chain performed well, with the release of popular films such as *Toy Story*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Training Day* attracting good audiences.

Bingo continued to be hit by the impact of the National Lottery, especially the first year of scratchcards since their launch in March 1995. New-style bingo clubs fared better and nightclubs fared well.

Earlier this month, in Mr Teare's first acquisition since he arrived from English China Clays, Rank acquired Peter Morton's Hard Rock cafes for \$410m, completing the group's grip on the American-style restaurant chain around the world. Sales at Hard Rock, despite no new openings, were higher but margins lower.

Holiday bookings in the UK are currently higher and retail spending at Rank's resorts, which include Butlin's and Oasis Villages, has been good.



Andrew Teare: Poured cold water on expectations

Photograph: Financial Times

Roddick backer nets £12m in share sale

NIGEL COPE

The man who lent Anita Roddick £4,000 to help found the Body Shop 20 years ago, sold a 3.5 per cent stake in the company yesterday, netting £12m.

Ian McGlinn, a former garage owner, sold 6.7 million shares priced at 180p to the Aeon Group, one of Japan's largest retailers. Aeon is also the Body Shop's head franchise operator in Japan where it has 70 stores.

Mr McGlinn's sale will still leave him with a 23.8 per cent stake in Body Shop, worth £82m. The company said Mr McGlinn had told them he has "no current intention of making any further reductions in his shareholding".

Body Shop said it did not know why Mr McGlinn had decided to sell the shares. However, £12m is enough to buy more peppermint foot lotion and moisturising shaving gel than any man could ever need.

Though Mr McGlinn has been gradually reducing his stake in the company, he has been a loyal supporter. He first encountered Anita Roddick when he was running a garage

in Littlehampton and he used to eat in the Roddicks' restaurant. When the young Roddick was turned down by the bank for a loan, Mr McGlinn stepped in with a loan in return for a 50 per cent stake.

The business went on to become one of Britain's best-known companies with stores across the world. While Ms Roddick is one of Britain's most high-profile businesswomen, Mr McGlinn has maintained a low profile.

Body Shop said its new Japanese investor had not disclosed its reasons for buying the shares. "They know our business quite well. We view it as a positive move."

Body Shop's shares have been under a cloud because of difficult trading in America. Its trading statement at its annual meeting last week showed like-for-like sales in America still falling and flat in the UK.

Gordon and Anita Roddick had hatched a plan to take Body Shop private but later abandoned the move when news of their intentions leaked last year. It has since tried to woo the City with a more progressive dividend policy.

	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Adia (F)	100m (150m)	10.4m (8.64m)	17.02p (14.64p)	5p (5.3p)
Adia (F)	100m (107m)	7.86m (8.20m)	16.53p (13.71p)	6.55p (5.5p)
Arcton Finance (F)	2.35m (2.54m)	0.12m (0.57m)	0.5p (4.87p)	1.5p (1.5p)
Asia (F)	6.04m (5.28m)	312m (257m)	7.96p (6.16p)	2.66p (2.2p)
BPF Industries (F)	1.43m (1.33m)	161m (163m)	20.5p (22p)	8.7p (9p)
Central Finance (F)	32.3m (18.1m)	-1.94m (-1.21m)	-7.4p (-4.9p)	0p (-)
Crut Midland (F)	132m (125m)	2.21m (0.13m)	0.42p (-0.34p)	0.6p (0.6p)
Dailyville Group (F)	38.4m (38.1m)	2.2m (2.25m)	16.54p (19.9p)	7.5p (11p)
Dart Group (F)	68.0m (63.3m)	3.80m (2.96m)	14.5p (13.4p)	5.9p (4.8p)
Forest Trading (F)	- (-)	0.38m (1.0m)	2.3p (6.62p)	1.9p (4.8p)
Pyrites (F)	1600m (6535m)	120.8m (17.3m)	3.21p (3.05p)	0.52p (0.47p)
Harveys & Hargreaves (F)	16.3m (16.5m)	3.82m (3.93m)	10.23p (10.52p)	3.9p (3.7p)
Metals Hardware (F)	128m (102m)	7.84m (6.11m)	34.7p (19.6p)	10.8p (8.8p)
Kendall Systems (F)	35.2m (33.7m)	6.09m (5.07m)	33.7p (28.4p)	8p (6.5p)
Magnesium Power (F)	0.53m (0.11m)	-1.10m (-2.34m)	-7.13p (-4.52p)	0p (-)
Whitbread Inns (F)	13.4m (18.2m)	0.11m (0.82m)	0.43p (2.58p)	0.7p (1.5p)
St. Helens (F)	110m (105m)	-11.3m (-7.7m)	-7.5p (3.1p)	1.4p (-)
Mapson (F)	95.0m (92.0m)	1.47m (1.2m)	5.5p (3.9p)	1.8p (1.1p)
Peaterson (F)	3.88m (3.22m)	1.11m (1.73p)	5.2p (7.2p)	3p (-)
Pelican Group (F)	52.0m (51.8m)	7.51m (4.11m)	7.5p (4.86p)	5p (1.5p)
Reliance (F)	12.3m (12.9m)	-6.68m (-0.78m)	-1.51p (-1.88p)	0p (-)
Securicor (F)	672m (473m)	47.6m (47.6m)	5.1p (5.1p)	0.34p
Veysa Group (F)	16.0m (12.5m)	3.45m (2.91m)	16.5p (13.5p)	5.25p (4.2p)
Value from Value (F)	61.2m (63.6m)	7.47m (6.11m)	14p (8.8p)	3.8p (3p)

(F) - First (F) - Interim

Bowing Sumitomo boss dismisses all criticism

PETER RODGERS
Financial Editor

Tomichi Akiyama, chairman of Sumitomo Corporation, and his 43 directors bowed low to shareholders at yesterday's annual meeting in Osaka, in an apology for the company's losses of £1.2bn in the copper market. "We have caused a lot of trouble to our shareholders and we deeply regret this," Mr Akiyama said.

But that was as far as he was prepared to go. During a tightly

controlled 40-minute long meeting, Mr Akiyama offered not a word of explanation of the predicament in which Sumitomo has found itself as a result of the activities of its rogue trader, Yasuo Yamanaoka.

The meeting was held on the same day as 2,200 other Japanese company AGMs, part of a strategy devised years ago to defeat gangs of extortionists who were deliberately disrupting meetings until they were paid off.

The Sumitomo meeting was

held with high security, open only to shareholders with special invitations, with the press two floors away watching on closed circuit television. Japanese journalists said it was the first time a Sumitomo annual meeting had been open to the press, even electronically.

One lone questioner in a side room - where the individual shareholders were sent - dared to tackle the chairman.

Kazuyoshi Yuoka, owner of a fabric shop, asked how Mr Akiyama could not have known

about a trader who lost so much over such a long period, and whether he would take responsibility for the losses.

Mr Akiyama refused to comment and brushed him aside. When Mr Yuoka persisted, other shareholders shouted him down. "The directors are avoiding their responsibility. They are treating shareholders with contempt," Mr Yuoka told reporters afterwards.

Far from resigning, as the chairman of Barings did last year, Mr Akiyama was elevated

from president to chairman by a shareholder vote during the meeting, which also unanimously approved all the other proposed changes in personnel, including the reappointment of several executives in the copper trading division.

Speaking on the day investigators from the Serious Fraud Office and the US Commodity Futures Trading Commission arrived in Tokyo for talks with their Japanese counterparts, Mr Akiyama insisted that company officials did not know

about the losses until Mr Yamanaoka told them, and that he was a lone trader who had no inside help. He also refused to give any information about the copper stocks still held by Sumitomo.

Wildly varying guesses about how much copper Sumitomo has to sell have led to flat fluctuations in the copper market, with some traders claiming the company faces losses of £2.6bn rather than the £1.2bn to which it has admitted.

In London, copper prices shot up after a bad week.

Step forward, Mr Steve Webb...

CITY DIARY

JOHN WILLCOCK

A series of strait-laced events were disrupted by the triumphs and tribulations at Wembley the other night, not least the *Investor Relations* magazine annual awards at the Hilton International, Park Lane.

As the black-tie dinner progressed, in tandem with the England/Germany match, the diners grew increasingly restive. Finally, during "golden goal" extra-time, all restraint was thrown to the winds and the hordes defected to two television screens at either end of the bar. Compere Jeremy Paxman could only look on as the cheering mob urged England on - to no avail.

The whiff of anarchy did not end there. After the

match ended the subdued crowd returned to their tables for the awards. Mr Paxman announced the "Best Individual Investor Relations Officer" of the year award - Steve Webb of Argyll Group! The band struck up a rousing crescendo, the lights dimmed, a spotlight played on the stage - but no Steve Webb.

Yesterday an unrepentant Mr Webb, quizzed about his film-star-like non-appearance, said: "I couldn't possibly comment. Obviously I'm delighted that I won the award - but very disappointed England didn't win." And

yes, he was watching the match. Seizable chap.

More England match malarkey. John Redwood MP, former challenger for the Tory leadership, knew he had his work cut out speaking to over 1,000 people at the Fund Manager of the Year awards at the Albert Hall. At least it showed the match on big screens.

Ruefully, Mr Redwood began: "I get a definite impression of the relative importance of politicians at this moment, given the time that's been allotted to me to make my speech is during the half-time interval."

The Dalek continued ominously: "I know that it is common at these events to place bets on the length of the speech. I had planned to speak on the subject dear to all your hearts - the pros and cons of European Monetary Union [loud groans from the audience] but decided that it was probably better to focus in this speech on the pros."

He promptly sat down without a further word - to cheers and applause.

The latest gimmick from Archie Norman's Asda -

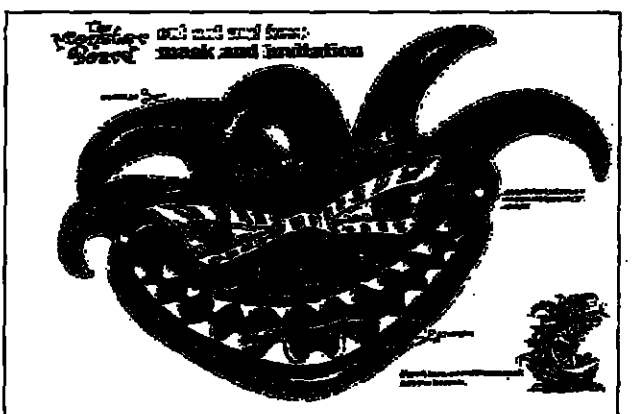
bottles of mineral water named "Great Yorkshire Water". The bottles will only be sold in Yorkshire, marked "While Stocks Last."

No doubt the Yorkshire Water company, still smarting from last year's drought, will find the joke hilarious. The water boys might even like to pop over to congratulate Asda - their head office in Leeds is right next to Asda's, on the opposite side of the River Aire.

Lord Sheppard of Didsbury, former chairman of Grand Metropolitan, has described his management style as "a light grip around the throat" and "orchestrated anarchy".

He is now offering advice for young people embarking on a career in management - get an accountancy qualification as quickly as possible, and then get stuck into marketing. Lord Sheppard says: "Everybody today needs to be a good marketer." He sees his own accountancy training as a priceless asset - "it does make you not in any way frightened of numbers."

Lord Sheppard recalls that he first considered accountancy at grammar school, when his father, an engine driver in east London, told him a friend knew someone who was an accountant and "he had made a lot of money".



http://monster.co.uk is being backed by companies including Ford Motor Company, ICL, Unisys, Sony, Lloyd's of London and Scottish & Newcastle, amongst others.

Predictably, the idea comes from America, where the US Monster Board has more than 50,000 jobs posted and averages 24,000 "hits" a day. *PC Magazine* rates it amongst the top 100 sites on the Web. (By the way, if any of this jargon is confusing you, retrain or retire. The number of individuals and businesses going on-line is growing by 10 per cent per month.) The people behind the UK version have helpfully provided a "monster mask" (above) for the launch party, a slightly anorakish touch in an otherwise thoroughly business-like operation.

All aboard for BPB recovery

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY TOM STEVENSON

BPB, Europe's biggest plasterboard maker, has on the face of it reached something of a plateau. The profits recovery since a vicious European price war in plasterboard ended in 1992 came to a shuddering halt last year in the face of soaring raw materials prices and depression in the British, French and Canadian housing markets. Stripping out gains on business and asset disposals, profits were flat as a pancake at £168m in the year to March.

Worse still, the four big European plasterboard groups have reacted to the end of the price war with increases in capacity in Germany, Europe's biggest market. Once all the new plants come on stream this year, culminating in BPB's £50m state-of-the-art facility in Berlin next month, the British group estimates potential over-capacity could hit 50 million square metres, a fifth of current demand.

But there are several reasons prices might hold up better this time, despite the expected flood of new supplies. For a start, BPB's main Continental rivals, Knauf and Lafarge, are in a weaker position to sustain a prolonged price war. The cost-cutting rationale behind many of the new plants is also likely to mean that they will replace rather than add to existing capacity.

Longer-term, the industry's investment strategy rests on plasterboard continuing to be one of the fastest-growing building materials. Last year marked something of a pause, with 6 per cent first-half volume growth in Europe turning into a flat second half. But despite the downturn in German construction, use of plasterboard in the country's housing market is still less than a third of the level of that in the UK and France. The still small eastern and southern European markets are romping ahead, with volumes up 30 per cent overall last year and up to 100 per cent in some.

BPB reckons the German capacity overhang should be absorbed in two to three years. The fact that it has held on to 3 to 4 points of the 10-12 per cent price increases pushed through at the turn of the year lends support to that view. Meanwhile, backed by gearing cut to under 10 per cent, BPB is pushing into new growth markets. It will spend £80m this year on gaining a foothold in Chile, which will form a launch pad for Brazil and Argentina. Further out, with bor-

rowing capacity of up to £250m, BPB may be tempted to have another crack at one of the US industry leaders.

The risk remains that the western European recovery fails to materialise. But assuming profits of £186m for this year, the shares, up 3.5p at 308.5p, stand on a prospective price/earnings ratio of 13 and remain a core holding.

Call charges hit Securicor

Three months ago shares in Securicor soared to new highs on news of plans to simplify the company's antiquated capital and operating structure. The long-awaited move increased liquidity in the shares and was seen as paving the way for a full takeover of the security to parcel delivery group.

But tucked away in the update on current trading that accompanied the statement was a warning that the rate of profits growth at mobile phone group Cellnet, where Securicor holds a 40 per cent stake, was slowing down. Continued investment in building its digital infrastructure and a fall off in the number of new subscribers in the key Christmas

selling period were blamed.

It was not until yesterday that the full implication of that statement finally registered with investors. The shares fell 28p to 245p as Securicor posted flat pre-tax profits of £47.6m in the six months to March and repeated almost verbatim the cautious sentiments of three months ago. Turnover rose from £473m to £612m, while the dividend was increased 12 per cent to 0.354p despite static earnings per share of 5.1p.

Cellnet, the main profit centre, chipped in profits of £35.2m, up £2.2m on the corresponding period last year. Subscriber numbers stood at just under 2.4m, but Cellnet made heavy hints yesterday that new customer growth was slowing while average subscriber revenues are falling as the mix of customers switches from corporate to mass-market users.

Elsewhere, profits advanced to £10.2m from £6.7m in parcels distribution but the cellular services side slipped into the red after taking a £4m charge to cover possible bad debts.

Analysts were busy scaling back forecasts for this year by about 10 per cent to £105m, implying a premium p/e rating going forward of 21. That may sound demanding but the hid-

den value within Securicor could be unlocked if BT decides to snap up the 40 per cent of Cellnet it does not already own. Meanwhile, the shares could be worth as much as 350p on a sum-of-the-parts basis. A good buying opportunity.

Pelican bites off a beakful

On the face of it, Pelican's full-year figures were nothing to complain about - pre-tax profits up 83 per cent to £7.5m from a 63 per cent sales increase and earnings per share 55 per cent better at 7.5p. The shares, however, closed 8.5p lower at 146.5p as investors worried about the sustainability of the group's recent meteoric growth.

It is hardly surprising when the company itself seems to be admitting that last year's 37 openings was a bit more than it could sensibly chew.

A more manageable 22 are planned for the current year which should allow more time to be spent getting returns up from the existing portfolio which now totals 100 sites, mainly Cafe Rouge and Dome restaurants.

To be fair, the group, which started from scratch six years ago, needed something of an opening blitz to create the critical mass over which to spread its overheads and develop attractive buying terms.

An expected £300,000 saving on wine costs alone, thanks to shipping it in centrally, shows the sort of economies of scale that are available to a bigger group.

But there is no doubt that the trading environment of the early 1990s which allowed Pelican to pick up failed restaurants at a song has changed significantly. Pelican is not alone in finding it increasingly difficult to find high street sites at sensible prices, part of the reason for its admittedly successful move out of London.

A rising tax charge means that slowing profits growth will be even more noticeable at the earnings line and forecast earnings per share of 8.5p this year and 10p to March 1998 put the shares on a pretty demanding price-earnings ratio of 17 falling to 15. Despite persistent bid rumours, expect a pause for breath.

BPB Industries: at a glance

Market value: £1.56bn, share price 308.5p

Trading record	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996
Pre-tax profit (£m)	37.8	57.5	106	168	161
Operating profit (£m)	37.8	57.5	106	168	161
Dividends per share (pence)	11.25	7.5	8.1	9.0	9.7

Operating margins

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Operating margin (%)

Share price

Share price

Share price

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Share price



COMMENT

Though Asda denies it, its campaign to cut the price of over-the-counter medicines will push many small independent pharmacies to the brink of extinction.

Supermarkets are sucking the high street dry

So much for the market saturation Archie Norman used constantly to warn of a few years back. He's changed his tune quite a bit since then. This year Asda plans to open eight new superstores. And although Mr Norman has done a fine job in turning Asda round and making it the store you might want to go to out of choice, it is not market penetration alone that allows him to do this. Tesco too will be opening eight new superstores this year and Sainsbury's something similar. Safeway is expanding, and Somerfield will also want to extend its tentacles once floated on the stock market.

Asda says it hopes to avoid planning restrictions by shunning greenfield sites in favour of derelict land. That may help get these monstrosities built but it doesn't make them any more justifiable. The fact is that each new superstore is deliberately designed to take essential trade away from the nearest high street. In that sense Mr Norman is right to talk about saturation.

The grocery tree isn't growing, or not by much, but it is becoming consolidated in the big hypermarkets. In their constant search for new markets and new products they are sucking the high street dry. And in so doing they are building a powerful oligopoly that future generations will curse us for allowing. For the time being, the convenience and economies of scale that hypermarkets allow seem largely to work in the consumer's favour. But with so many powerful local shopping monopolies

being created, it will not always be thus. Asda yesterday announced it is buying 10 pharmacies which will be shifted into the nearest Asda. This is all part of Stormin' Norman's campaign to cut the price of over-the-counter medicines.

Though Asda denies it, the campaign will also push many small independent pharmacies to the brink of extinction, robbing the high street of yet another essential service – the fulfilment of prescriptions. You and I might like the convenience of buying our medicines with the weekly shop from the nearest supermarket, but when the little old lady from round the corner pegs out because she can't make the journey, we may not be so sure.

Bit by bit the supermarkets are hoovering up all the services that once upon a time were bought piecemeal on the high street. There are dry cleaners, hairdressers, florists and travel agents, post offices, bank ATM machines and record stores. Why even gas and electricity, Mr Norman promises, will eventually be sold through the supermarket. Nor is the damage confined to smaller in-town retailers. Product suppliers, too, are being squeezed to the point of oblivion.

If the Government really wants to protect the high street it must encourage local authorities to offer better parking, cleaner pavements, and more security. High street stores, so used to competing with each other, will have to club together with more joint promotions, and joint loyalty cards, to

make their local parade more attractive. Otherwise we will soon find that we have more supermarkets than we are ever likely to need. And not a lot else.

BT needs to be held in check

Whether or not cable operators are justified in accusing BT of dirty tricks, there is no doubt that the timing of these allegations could hardly have been worse for Britain's still dominant telecoms company. BT is desperately trying to resist demands from the regulator, Don Cruickshank of OfTel, for new powers which would allow him to crack down on any anti-competitive practice in the telecoms market.

So far BT has won some support for its position. The tone of most reasonable comment on the matter has been yes, the regulator is going too far this time; he's asking for absolute powers and there is a real danger of him exercising them in an arbitrary and oppressive fashion.

Now BT is being accused of abusing its access to confidential data by phoning hundreds of ex-directory cable customers and asking them to consider switching back to BT. Even if the allegations are not true, some of the mud will stick. The point that will be made is that you cannot trust a monopoly.

Mr Cruickshank has already eased his

demands on tariffs to a level BT admits it can probably live with. The sticking point remains the fair trading powers. We'll go to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, screams BT. Maybe it will, but it is unlikely to do any good. Fair trading powers of the type demanded by OfTel are pretty much par for the course throughout the rest of Europe and it won't be long before they arrive here.

True, they don't yet apply on the Continent to the state-owned telecoms monopolies, but they will after 1998 when liberalisation is meant to become a reality. There are already enough channels of appeal open to BT against the possibility of arbitrary decision-making by the regulator – the Monopolies and Mergers Commission and the courts being the main ones. On the balance of possibilities, it is much more likely that BT will abuse its position as a monopoly than that OfTel will abuse its position as a regulator. Even if the cable allegations prove ill-founded, they make a good point – monopolies are bad news, they need to be held in check, and the regulator needs adequate powers to do so.

There is also a great deal more technical expertise around, about risk management and all the rest of it, so banks are better at analysing their own businesses. More important than either of these is the real possibility that Britain's low inflation is now here to stay, whichever party is in power, which is a much better environment for safe lending.

In the last Quarterly Bulletin the Bank of England had a go at mortgage lenders who were virtually giving away their money, which is asking for trouble. Yesterday Pen Kent, a Bank director, made clear his exasperation with corporate lenders who are returning to all the bad habits that got them into trouble last time, such as lending at non-existent margins with low security and weak covenants.

With the Bank of England remaining so sceptical, the idea that banks have reached some kind of promised land in which the cycle of greed and repentance is abolished is plainly ridiculous.

Banks are back in bad habits

There has been a movement afoot to persuade investors that banks are reformed institutions that do not throw

CBI warns on tax cuts ahead of election

NIC CICUTTI

Adair Turner, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, yesterday warned the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, not to plump for a pre-election tax-cutting Budget, claiming that the economy did not need one, anyway.

Mr Turner said that even if the Chancellor were tempted to introduce tax cuts, public borrowing levels were unlikely to allow scope for any significant move in that direction.

"Consumer expenditure has grown by 2.5 per cent over the last year, sales of household goods are picking up, and the housing market is beginning to stir," he told the CBI's South-east region annual dinner.

He added: "We expect further acceleration, with robust consumer spending growth next year, even without any tax cuts. The facts are that public borrowing has not come down at anything like the pace envisaged, and remains high after four years of growth."

He said that the budget deficit was still high, and reduction must be a priority. "Stability and continuity must be the watchwords. Whatever the temptations of a pre-election year, we will be urging the Chancellor to stick to his belief that good economics is good politics."

Mr Turner's comments came as the Office for National Statistics yesterday released figures showing that the UK's global trade deficit in April was higher than expected at £1.322bn, and a 73 per cent increase over the £765m gap recorded in March.

Excluding erratic items, the deficit widened to £1.336bn from £1.132bn.

The "mad cow" crisis, which has blocked British beef exports to Europe, was partly responsible for the Britain's exports to EU countries dropping 2.5 per cent in April to £7.85bn.

However, total UK exports in April rose to £13.85bn, a 0.3 per cent increase on the previous month. The improvement in the exports was even more significant in relation to non-EU countries, rising 4 per cent to £6.016bn.

The trade figures released yesterday exclude so-called "invisible earnings" from services, interest earnings and dividends.

Alex Garrard, an economist at Swiss banking group UBS, said: "The rising domestic demand has resulted in a pick-up in imports and this trend is going to continue for the foreseeable future. Weak European markets will mean that the UK manufacturing sector will find it hard to expand in the near-term," he said.

Mr Garrard added that the EU component of the deficit could be the cause of "some concern" towards the year-end.

The trade deficit with EU countries reached £527m, the highest since October last year, in part reflecting the economic slowdown taking place on the Continent.

The shortfall with countries outside the EU also widened to £834m.

In the three months to April, total exports rose 3.1 per cent compared with the previous six months, while imports were up 3.8 per cent in the same period.

IN BRIEF

- British Telecom announced it would open a new service centre in Warrington in January creating over 1,000 new jobs. BT said the centre would allow it to keep in regular telephone contact with residential customers. Meanwhile, industry watchdog OfTel said it was waiting for a response from BT to reports that it had allegedly misused customer information to call ex-directory numbers of customers of rival cable companies in a bid to win back their custom. BT's reply has been delayed until 1 July. The shares fell 6.5p to 344p.
- Magnum Power, the Scottish maker of power back-up systems for computers, said recent production problems would put back the break-even anticipated during this year until 1997. Shares in Magnum fell 23p to 54p on the news, compared with their 35p issue price two years ago. The company also reported increased losses of £3.2m, versus a £2.3m deficit, in the year to May.
- Boots spent £293m buying back 50.5 million of its own shares at 580p and confirmed it was looking for acquisitions in the over-the-counter medicines market. The buyback was widely expected as the group said two weeks ago it would return some of its cash pile to shareholders if it could not find a better use for it. The group still has more than £300m of net cash after yesterday's move. It follows a £508m share buyback in November 1994. NatWest acted as brokers in the latest deal.
- Jan Lang, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, said he would refer the acquisition by National Express of Midland Main Line to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, unless suitable undertakings were given by National Express. Mr Lang believes the merger may lead to a significant loss of competition on some routes between London and the East Midlands and South Yorkshire where National Express would have a significant share of the market in both rail and coach travel. At the same time, Mr Lang has cleared the £205m acquisition by Johnson Press of the regional newspaper business owned by Emap.
- Sir Andrew Large, chairman of the Securities and Investments Board, said the outcome of the personal pensions review he launched in November 1994 was not as satisfactory as he had wanted. He warned that if regulators believed firms were dragging their heels on the issue, they would not fail to take disciplinary action. His comments came as the SIB issued its annual report for the year to March, showing Sir Andrew received a pay rise from 1 January, taking his annual salary from £170,000 to £195,000.
- Jonathan Mervis, former Unigroup chief executive has been put forward as a candidate for the board of taxi operator Hanson Group in an EGM requisition received by Hanson. The requisition seeks to oust executive chairman Peter Jennings from the board and appoint Mr Mervis.

A competition open to anyone with a kind heart and a good eye.

All you have to do is take a photograph.

It can be a photo of anything you feel represents the 'Heart of Britain'.

There are nine categories, which might give you some ideas: Young Britain, Caring Britain, Animal Britain, Sporting Britain, Britain on the Move, Good Time Britain, Beautiful Britain, Working Britain, and Tomorrow's Britain.

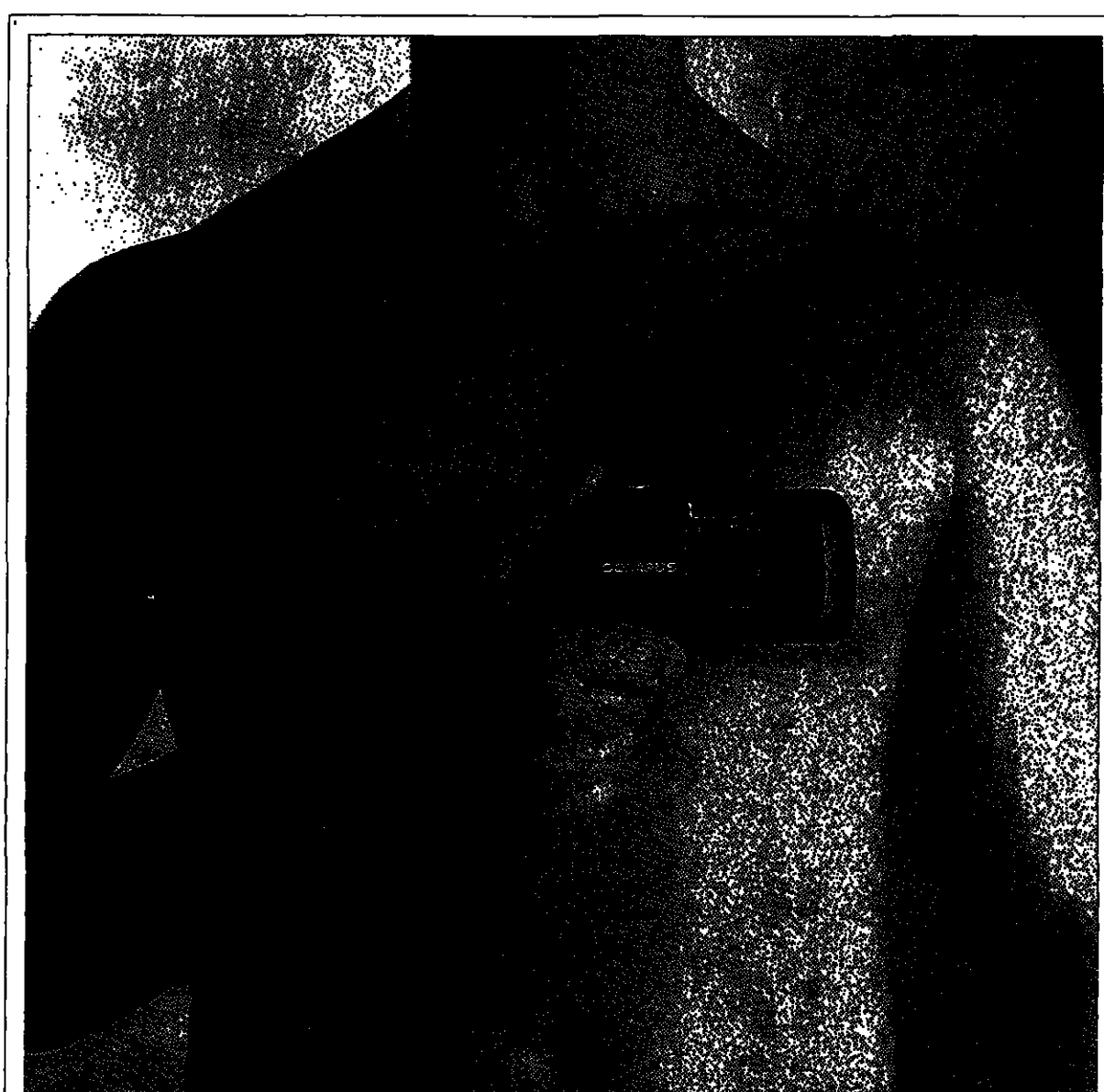
Your photo might be one of the 300 chosen by a panel of celebrity judges to appear in the 'Heart of Britain' book, which will be on sale in October.

The winner of each category will be given a camera like the one you can see in the picture – the new compact Mju-1, generously donated by Olympus.

There is a small entry fee, but all the proceeds of the entries and royalties from the book will go to Royal Brompton Hospital, one of the leading heart and lung hospitals in the world.

By entering the competition you will be saving someone's life. Your contribution will help us raise the £1.5 million we desperately need to continue with our research and the treatment of heart disease, which is still the biggest killer in Britain.

Each year we care for thousands of patients, including over 400 babies born with heart defects. (If you would like to make a contribution now donations can be made at any branch of Lloyds Bank or by post to The Heart of



Heart of Britain

Britain Appeal, Royal Brompton Hospital, London SW3 6NP)

The Heart of Britain photo competition takes place in the first week of July but you will be able to pick up an entry form before then from BP garages, branches of Dixons, John Menzies and WH Smith, Dillons, Waterstone's and other major bookshops, or by phoning the Heart of Britain on 0891 252605.

The Heart of Britain book will be a remarkable record of the nation in the final years of the 20th Century. And your photograph and name could be there for all to see.

But the pleasure you might get will be far outweighed by the pleasure you will give. Because you will be giving someone the chance of a better life; or simply a better chance of living. So have a heart. Take a picture.

In support of Royal Brompton Hospital, the leading edge in heart research and treatment.

Supported by: AMV Group • Bookman Projects • Dixons • Halifax Building Society • Hilldown Holdings • Love This Records • Marks & Spencer

*Cells will last less than one minute and are charged at 39p per minute (cheap rates, 49p per minute at all other times). All profits will be donated to charity. Lines close 10th July 1996.

market report/shares

DATA BANK

FT-SE 100
3678.8 -16.7

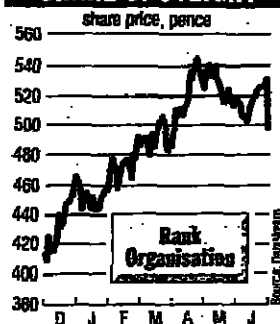
FT-SE 250
4340.9 -24.4

FT-SE 350
1857.1 -8.9

SEAQ VOLUME
766.8m shares,
27,149 bargains

Gifts Index
92.56 +0.04

SHARE SPOTLIGHT



Food and pub sectors get indigestion on growth fears

MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter
of the year

The high-flying pub and restaurant companies, which have comfortably outperformed, could soon find themselves slipping from the stock market's growth menu.

Figures from Pelican, the restaurant group, and Yate's Wine Lodges, confirmed trading is getting tougher with demand for new sites squeezing up the cost of expansion.

Rank Organisation, the nation's biggest leisure group, underlined the pressure on recreational spending when it reported restaurant trading below last year's levels.

Perhaps not surprising, then, that the catering high-flyers should be dragged from their elevated bar stools. Rank set the tone, off 33p at 498p. Pelican dived 11.5p to 144p and Yate's shaded 3p to 385p.

Elsewhere Grosvenor Inns stumbled 10p to 265p; Regent Inns 24p to 196p and JD Wetherspoons 48p to 990p.

Groupe Chez Gerard was also mauled off 15p to 334p; Springwood, the Fatty Arbuckle theme pub chain, fell 5p at 718p.

Away from the smoked salmon, oriental chicken and pint of beer agenda the market was in a dour mood with the FT-SE 100 index off 16.7 points at 3678.8. The second-liners continued their unrelenting retreat, with the FT-SE 250 index off 24.4 points at 4340.9.

Asda's much-in-line profit performance left the shares 4p off at 114p and Boots's £300m buyback at 580p came as no surprise, with the price a shade lower at 580p.

BTR rallied from its recent low point, achieving a 5p gain to 255p, and fellow conglomerate struggler Hanson managed to edge ahead 3p to 179p.

Danks Business Systems gave up a further 20p to 470p



as the market struggled to accommodate the unexpectedly downbeat trading statement and Cardinal Business fell 8p to 24.5p after reporting increased losses and the sale of its office products side for £6.3m.

Sun Life & Provincial, the new issue flop, continued to let down its supporters. In busy trading the shares fell another 1.5p to 221p, leaving once again a yawning 14p gap from the flotation price.

United Utilities, up 9p at 539p, was helped by James Capel support and speculation of a US deal.

Talk is strong that a leading American utility is thinking of

a merger or at least an in-depth trading link-up.

Camas, the building materials group, slipped 2.5p to 89.5p. Merrill Lynch is puzzled about the lack of positive news from a recent US junket. It looks for £25.5m this year and £28.5m for next. The shares peaked at 97p but Merrill says: "We are at a loss to explain this strength."

The securities group admits bid speculation is in the air but believes the shares are a sell.

Magnum Power's increased loss left the shares nursing a 23p loss at 54p; the price touched 180p last year. The group's problems impacted on Memory Corporation, off 15p

at just 75p. The shares of the repairer of defective computer chips have come down from 557p a year ago. It has already warned of the dire consequences of the slump in chip prices.

Worries about the signalled Carlsberg Tetley deal left Bass 5p down at 797p with Allied Domecq seeking yet another low, off 3p at 430p.

Scottish & Newcastle, figures next week, ignored supportive NatWest Securities comments, losing 3p to 652p.

Christies International, the fine arts auctioneer, had a difficult session, falling 8p to 214p. Joseph Lewis, the Bahamas-based investor, continues to sit on a near-30 per cent stake although stories flow that he is looking to sell.

Mr Lewis has latched on to other investment opportunities, Union, the financial group, and English National, an investment trust. He has estab-

lished a reputation as a long-term investor but the dull performance of Christies must be testing his patience. The market suspects he is looking for a buyer; if he has to hang around much longer without realising a profit he could be tempted to mounting a bid.

His involvement at Union, once the proud Union Discount Company of London, has also been unwelcome, prompting talk that his 16.7 per cent is available.

Whittard of Chelsea, the tea and coffee group, managed a strong debut, hitting 158p against a 148p placing. Body Shop International shaded 3p to 180p as Ian McGilinn, an original backer, trimmed his stake to 23.8 per cent.

Brent Walker fell 0.5p to 2.5p on stories it had dumped plans to float its Pubmaster subsidiary and was banking on a sale to a trade group or City-backed consortium.

TAKING STOCK

□ Panther Securities, the property group, has turned defeat into victory. It lost its bitter battle for control of Elys of Wimbledon but after booking a £775,000 profit on the adventure it is handing a 2p special dividend to its shareholders.

Panther, also paying a 3p dividend (2.7p), was outbid by the unquoted Morley's Stores. Its shares ended off 1.5p at 77.5p.

□ A row has erupted at Hanson, the taxi group with the unenviable distinction of being one of the worst performers on AIM.

Its shares fell 4p to a 21p low; they were floated at 60p in September. Rebel shareholders are seeking to replace two directors, including chairman Peter Jennings. Jonathan Mervis, former head of Unigroup, is looking for a boardroom place.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 20 per cent as a percentage of the share price. The price-earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: 1 Ex-rights 2 Ex-dividend 3 As all 4 Unlisted Securities Market 5 Suspended 6 Penny Paid 7m 8m 9m 10m 11m 12m 13m 14m 15m 16m 17m 18m 19m 20m 21m 22m 23m 24m 25m 26m 27m 28m 29m 30m 31m 32m 33m 34m 35m 36m 37m 38m 39m 40m 41m 42m 43m 44m 45m 46m 47m 48m 49m 50m 51m 52m 53m 54m 55m 56m 57m 58m 59m 60m 61m 62m 63m 64m 65m 66m 67m 68m 69m 70m 71m 72m 73m 74m 75m 76m 77m 78m 79m 80m 81m 82m 83m 84m 85m 86m 87m 88m 89m 90m 91m 92m 93m 94m 95m 96m 97m 98m 99m 100m 101m 102m 103m 104m 105m 106m 107m 108m 109m 110m 111m 112m 113m 114m 115m 116m 117m 118m 119m 120m 121m 122m 123m 124m 125m 126m 127m 128m 129m 130m 131m 132m 133m 134m 135m 136m 137m 138m 139m 140m 141m 142m 143m 144m 145m 146m 147m 148m 149m 150m 151m 152m 153m 154m 155m 156m 157m 158m 159m 160m 161m 162m 163m 164m 165m 166m 167m 168m 169m 170m 171m 172m 173m 174m 175m 176m 177m 178m 179m 180m 181m 182m 183m 184m 185m 186m 187m 188m 189m 190m 191m 192m 193m 194m 195m 196m 197m 198m 199m 200m 201m 202m 203m 204m 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Roller-blades clue to a grey savings area of the future

In 30 years, this sentence will be twice the size – the type that is, not the number of words. Because doubling the average reader will have halving eyesight, just like the rest of us. By 2030, a quarter of the European population will be over 65, against only 15 per cent today, and businesses, governments and economists are already starting to anticipate huge changes to come.

Expanding markets for these new richer grey consumers, and falling national savings rates (as more people draw down their savings in retirement) are only two of the biggest consequences that most people expect. Economists then argue further about whether this kind of drop in savings will be bad for growth.

But the changes may not be quite as we anticipate. New research by Professor Richard Disney in today's issue of *Fiscal Studies* suggests that the key to the changes to come may lie in the rash reactions of the young, rather than the spendthrift habits of the old.

The idea that elderly consumer markets will expand seems well founded. The leisure and catering in-

dustries think so. The Joint Hospitality Industry Congress warned members last week to consider extra disabled access for restaurants and bigger type-faces for menus to cope with an older clientele.

The retired want different services from the yuppie and dinkies of the Eighties and Nineties. Businesses catering to the tastes of the older consumer will find their audience richer than ever before: 78 per cent of the 45-60 age-group are owner occupiers, compared with around 60 per cent of the over-70s.

Watch out, for example, for a boom in exotic foreign holidays aimed at older travellers, as Mintel the market research firm predicted last year. Or perhaps, looking further ahead, we can expect a sudden burst of outrage about the hitherto ignored monopolistic tendencies in the

funeral industry. The wider economic consequences seem straightforward enough too, at least, if you listen to simple economic theory. Given that spending patterns, savings habits, productivity rates and tax obligations are all heavily age-dependent, the greying of the nation seems bound to have an effect on aggregate economic performance too. As German economist Axel Röscher-Supan argues, "demographic shifts of such magnitude and speed are unprecedented since the Industrial Revolution, and the industrialised countries will need to learn how to cope with this change".

Simple economic theory tells us that more old people should mean less savings. According to the "Life-Cycle hypothesis" we borrow when we are young, save when we are middle-aged, then draw down those

savings when we retire. As a result, if there are more old people running down their savings, then the aggregate savings rate must fall.

But the theory isn't borne out in practice. Many people want to die in credit, perhaps to pass assets on to children, or because retirement has made them more cautious than they ever were during their working lives. If assets aren't just financial but sentimental – such as a family home – the desire to hoard rather than spend increases even further.

In an analysis of the 1988-9 UK Retirement Survey, Professor Disney finds that many people keep saving long into retirement. So, a gradually ageing population should have a lot less impact on the overall level of savings than the pessimists predict.

If the next generation of old people carry on saving in the same way as the current one, then in theory there shouldn't be much problem for the savings rate after all. The OECD calculated the effect on savings rates over the next 30 years assuming the over-65s continued to save, but at half the current average savings rate. The upper lines on the graphs show the results for the US, Japan and the UK. The overall saving rate hardly changes.

Of course it would be foolish to be too optimistic. Suppose on the other hand that the elderly are forced out of their prudent habits by demographic pressure. If, for example, government provides less health-care support, long-term care support and lower pensions than they expected, they may have to run down their savings after all. The OECD calculates what would happen in this case, too – producing the much more pessimistic lower line on the graphs.



Age-old riddle: As the leisure industry gears up for big spending by golden oldies, research suggests the saving habit dies hard

On the face of it, however, it looks as though we can sit back and relax. Savings by the elderly are fine – so presumably overall savings rates will hold up, too. Furthermore, retailers should not expect too big a boom in sales of elderly leisure services. For while there will be more of them, they won't be blowing their bank balances. Most of them will carry on saving instead. As a warning for the leisure industries, these

new retired consumers may be more interested in special savings plans than they are in a round-the-world cruise. The two massive consequences expected of the ageing population look set to be damp squibs.

But a huge puzzle remains in all of this. Professor Disney's research shows that there is still a relationship between the age of a population and its savings rate. Looking across different countries, and different time

periods he finds that older populations do still save less. Despite the fact that the elderly don't run down their savings, countries as a whole do seem to cut their savings as their populations age. Savings may be set to fall in future after all, even if the elderly are not to blame.

He offers a fascinating possible explanation. We know that the elderly are reluctant to spend their savings, but what if someone else in the family is doing the spending instead?

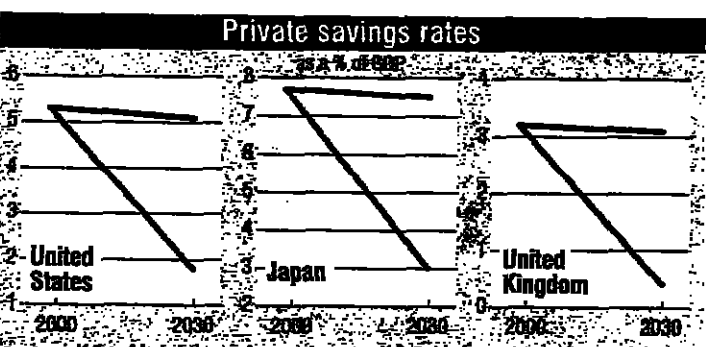
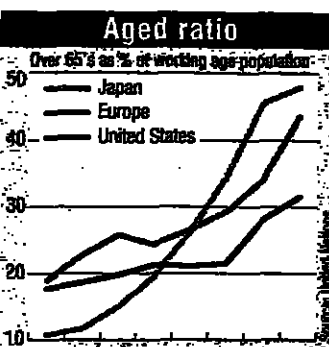
Families who receive inheritances certainly spend more. They can pay off the mortgage quicker, or give the teenagers some extra cash to help them through college.

Research by Weil in the US found that families there increased consumption by an average 10 per cent once the next-egg from granny arrived. More intriguing, families who anticipated an inheritance, raised their spending by around 5 per cent before the windfall even arrived.

So the middle-aged couple with their two kids and their mortgage, seeing that their parents have no intention of blowing their savings on weekend cruises or trinkets, spend the cash for them in advance. Could this be the reason old people keep saving while nations with lots of old people still save less?

The statistical evidence to back up the Disney/Weil thesis may not be there yet, but the anecdotal evidence is pretty good.

Anyone else anticipating a boom from services for a grey generation should think again. The big spenders of the future may turn out to be exactly the same selfish consumers in their youth and middle age. Forget double-sized menus and invest in roller-blades after all.



Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
US	154.80	5.3	5.0	4.8	4.6
Canada	22.72	11.3	10.7	10.1	9.5
Germany	25.58	48.41	100.50	152.8	25.34
France	78.01	122.13	365.334	54.80	73.56
Italy	237.08	48.48	142.168	153.94	44.31
Japan	124.9	15.11	15.45	15.45	15.45
Belgium	48.48	75.7	225.276	103.30	45.44
Denmark	90.663	159.16	446.235	58.645	55.65
Netherlands	28.573	65.17	170.71	170.71	170.71
Ireland	0.878	7.3	20.14	15.92	4.7
Norway	10.445	100.45	310.500	64.681	42.17
Spain	97.35	21.31	66.86	128.14	28.27
Sweden	10.291	0.4	1.9	6.630	58.123
Switzerland	19.338	54.46	165.162	125.09	37.34
Australia	19.936	20.31	67.85	128.76	19.21
Hong Kong	11.967	10.71	224.170	7.711	2.12
Malaysia	3.5849	0.0	0	2.6265	4.1
New Zealand	2.5757	43.57	133.156	14.857	30.32
Saudi Arabia	5.4761	0.0	0	3.7505	2.7
Singapore	2.806	0.0	0	1.405	41.30

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Germany	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
France	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Italy	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Japan	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Belgium	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Denmark	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Netherlands	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Ireland	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Norway	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Spain	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sweden	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Australia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Hong Kong	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Saudi Arabia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Singapore	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

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Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
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Italy	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Japan	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Belgium	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Denmark	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Netherlands	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Ireland	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Norway	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Spain	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sweden	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Australia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Hong Kong	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Saudi Arabia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Singapore	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Forward rates quoted low to high are at a discount; rates quoted low to high are at a premium.

*Dollar rates quoted as reciprocal.

For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0891 123 3033.

Cable cost 20p per minute (cheaper rates 40p other times).

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Germany	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
France	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Italy	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Japan	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Belgium	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Denmark	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Netherlands	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Ireland	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Norway	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Spain	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sweden	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Australia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Hong Kong	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Saudi Arabia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Singapore	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

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France	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Italy	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Japan	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Belgium	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Denmark	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Netherlands	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Ireland	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Norway	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Spain	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Sweden	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Australia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Hong Kong	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
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Singapore	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

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UK	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Germany	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
France	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Italy	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Japan	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Belgium	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Denmark	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
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Ireland	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
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Hong Kong	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Malaysia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
New Zealand	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Saudi Arabia	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Singapore	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
UK	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Germany	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

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HYPERION

5.15 Fun Galore	7.55 FAIRYWINGS (nap)
5.50 Twice As Sharp	8.25 Swiss Coast
7.25 Smarter Charter (nb)	8.55 Northern Spark

Pipe fined over Silk sample

6.15 YORKSHIRE-TYNE TEES TELEVISION STAKES (CLASS C)
£7,500 added 2YO 7f Penalty Value £5,979

3.00 SCOTTISH EQUITABLE RATED HANDICAP (CLASS C) £8,000 added 1m 2f

1 000540 SECRETARY ARI (23) (D) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 Dogle 1
 2 6-11225 MASTER CHARGER (24) (B) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 Petter 8
 3 100541 SODAMACK (24) (D) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 Quinn 8
 4 30023 MASTER CHARGER (24) (B) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 Quinn 8
 5 100542 SILVER ORCHARD (23) (D) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 Quinn 7
 6 100543 ALUMINA BUSH (24) (B) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 W. Green 6
 7 60020 ALUMINA BUSH (24) (B) 8 Year 6 9 8 1 W. Green 6
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6-1 Ramez, 10-1 Westminster, 12-1 Ayuni, 14-1 others

4.00	GIRDLESTONE PUMPS HANDICAP (CLASS 4)			
	£7,000 about 3YO 5F			
1	36-6010	ASHBUTTER DAY (2) (12) 1 Clarent 9	7	Stack (3)
2	1-158	ARMSWART (4) (8) A Stewart 9	1	N Roberts
3	61-1024	GALINE (1) (2) W O'Garra 9	5	Penna O'Garra
4	02-1020	TOTAL ALOOF (23) (2) R Hughes 8	11	B Doyle
5	3-05334	DAVIDE FLYER (8) (20) D Anderson 8	11	Quinn
6	5236-58	PLAYWRIGHT (8) (1) M Jones 10	5	P Johnston
7	2-5401	CHALICE (1) (4) Jeding 8	1	Pat Egan (7)
8	0-06312	STONEY END (24) (13) M Graham 8	6	Pat Egan
9	3055-43	PLEASURE TIME (38) (3) C Smith 8	1	M Fenton

1 GRAPESNOT (USA) / Curry 90 _____ D Harrison
2 GREEN POWER / Farnham 90 _____ D Harrison
3 MANI MONA / Curry 90 _____ D Harrison

4 REGAL ESTATE C Wm 9 0 A McIlwain
5 CG ZARETSKO C Rasm 9 0 B Doyle
6 YASHMAK (USA) H Cool 8 9 Pat Edrington
..... B declared -

BETTING: 5-4 Yashmak, 3-1 Grapestock, 7-2 Mast Horse, 7-1 Brown Pot
er, 14-1 Zaretsko, 15-1 Real Estate

7.40 DAILY ECHO HANDICAP (CLASS **SKY**)
C \$7,750 added 1m 6f

1 100-053 MYSTIC HILL (7) G H Hanwood 5 10 0 T Quinn
2 20310-0 TUDOR ISLAND (20) D C Bream 7 9 7 B Doyle
3 530060 WHELFORD 60 R Acceptance 5 9 5 R Pappas

6 052-213 SHARAF (35) (BF) J Dunlop 3 8 7 _____ W Carson 5
7 62033-0 SUPREME STAR (USA) (22) (D) P Hodge 5 8 6N Varley (3)

[illegible]

6	0-546	ALBATROSS (C) J. Gussner 3 9 0	W. Gussner 1
7	55-4003	ROI DE LA MER (B) (D) J. Akerhus 5 8 11	T. Quinn 1
8	00324-2	VICALL LODGE (B) H. Colquhoun 6 8 10	M. Bismarck

[illegible]

5 SIGNS AND WONDERS C Q₂₄ B 9 _____ T Quinn
- B declined -

9:10 **MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES**
(CLASS D) £5,100 added 3YO 1m 2f

1 822 KINGS OF SPAINA (14) (R) Lumen 9.0 ... Pat Edey
2 0-000 NIKKY WAY (3) J Gledes 9.0 ... W Ryan 2
3 3 SEVENUS (USA) (22) Luc Harrington 9.0 ... D Doyle
4 TOPUP J Hie 9.0 ... M Henry (R)
5 0-5 ALSUMA (13) J Fennhouse 8.9 ... D Harrington
6 CORDER (28) B Gully 8.9 ... S Semles
7 FREDERIE REGALL M Heaton-Ells 8.9 ... S Dromey (D)

12-1 Topup, 14-1 Freddie's Recall, 20-1 others

3. MOMENT (Martin 2-1; 3. Racing Hawk 12-1; 7.10. Hank 7-2 1.6) Bating, Ningside 24.40, 21.10, £3.70. 4. Woot 11,632.44. 5. 5371.25 to New-Runner: Morning Eye.

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4.30: 1. AVINALARF (D Seecrey) 11. 2. Marie of Castille 11 3. Russian Star 10-11.4. Ben 12-4. Hk. NW Turner, Shorne). Totals: £7.60; £2.30, £3.10, £34.00. CSF: £52.35. Non Runner: Grey fair Flyer.

5.00: 1. FARAWAY LASS (Aimee Co 9-4; 1-2. Out 10 1/2. 3. Corniche 9-0 10-1. 11.3. 14.1. (Lund Hasting), W. Isley. Totals: £2.90; £1.80, £5.60, £2.40. Forecast: £52.50. Computer Serv

00: 1. **MILMOSA** (Mr S Fetherstonhaugh)
; 2. **Superior Force 5-1**; 3. **Sunley Se-**
B-2 B ran. 7.2 for Sound Creek (4th)

Place 6: DGO 83, Place 6: £ 711.63.
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sport

EURO 96

There is room for technical improvement but England were not far behind the best and would have been favoured to beat the Czechs

You cannot help suspecting that England's defeat by Germany at the semi-final stage of Euro 96 came as a relief to some prominent members of the Football Association.

They have been spared the embarrassment of Terry Venables being hailed as a national hero six months after their lack of support prompted the England coach's decision to become available for alternative employment upon completion of his stint in the championship.

Of course, there was the dilemma provided by Venables' legal entanglements, but the FA thought it in-sustainable why was a compromise suggested to him a week or so before Glenn Hoddle's succession?

That the FA thought seriously

about persuading Venables to continue became clear in a long conversation I had with him shortly before Euro 96 got under way. It appears that Venables was asked to consider a one-year extension of his contract which, as it took him only half-way through an attempt to qualify for the 1998 World Cup finals in France, made very little sense. Anyway, it did not appeal to Venables.

Events during England's short pre-championship tour of the Far East not only enabled Venables' critics to argue further that no possible case could be made for him but doubtless comforted those in authority who had opposed his appointment.

Subsequent dramas have, however, put a different slant on things.

The importance Venables attached to spending time with his players in a competitive situation was borne out by England getting to within a shoot-out of the final.

Venables has long been convinced that the best qualities of British football, its verve and spirit could be married to the intelligent application of technique that is central to Germany's remarkable record of 11 appearances in the final of major championships. Venables is greatly taken with developments in the Netherlands, but from what we have seen so far the Germans are perhaps a better example.

Someone was saying yesterday that the difference in fortunes between German and English football



KEN JONES
COMMENTARY

mirrors national characteristics. "They have the efficiency that has helped to bring all those successes but they don't have a Paul Gascoigne," he said.

In the minds of many, I suppose

that watching Germans play football is a bit like watching Bernhard Langer play golf. *Vorsprung durch technik*. As Germany produced Franz Beckenbauer, to my mind one of the eight greatest players in history (with Pele, Alfredo di Stefano, Johan Cruyff, Ferenc Puskas, George Best, Diego Maradona and John Charles) this does not hold up completely.

Nevertheless, efficiency is what we have come to associate with German football and it was critical to the success of their depleted team in a quite momentous match at Wembley. The determined policy forced upon them by the absence of Jürgen Klinsmann and all but one of their first-choice forwards deserved the utmost ad-

miration. No Gascoigne maybe, but the best players on the field in Dieter Eilts and Matthias Sammer.

Luck deserted England on the night but in defeat they showed how much progress they have made since Venables set about modernising the method.

Earlier this week I suggested that Euro 96 has not lived up entirely to expectations. A number of teams, particularly the Netherlands and Portugal, were less than some made them out to be. There is room for technical improvement, but England were not far behind and would have been favoured to beat the Czech Republic.

Yesterday, Venables passed the torch on to Hoddle who has the task of qualifying England for the next

World Cup finals from what looks one of the toughest groups.

This is not to detract from Hoddle's ability but a similar move would never occur to the Germans. From Sepp Herberger - efficiency overcame a great Hungarian team in the 1954 World Cup final - to Helmut Schön, to Jupp Derwall to Beckenbauer, all winners of major titles. Vogts can join them on Sunday. The word is continuity.

What one wonders would the reaction have been if Venables had gone on to win Euro 96? High in public esteem, Venables was no more of a coach on Wednesday than he was before the tournament. Trouble was that people in positions of power lacked the guts to go along with him.

Time to kick out the senseless shoot-out

Trevor Haylett considers methods of settling drawn games without the pain of penalties

A compelling spectacle with incident and drama to spare, a celebration of intense competition yet with splendid sportsmanship on show as well. An occasion to enjoy your Englishness and to feel proud of our boys in grey. Wembley on Wednesday was all of these things. And then you remember Gareth Southgate.

The enduring image of one man's utter desolation as Southgate turned away from the goal where Andreas Möller had just struck the decisive penalty to put England alongside France, the Netherlands and Spain as the lottery losers of Euro 96, should be pinned to the chest of every administrator responsible for introducing this piece of loopy sporting legislation. Gentleman, it is time for change.

It so happens that Southgate is one of the most honourable, decent footballers you could wish to meet. He believes he has failed an entire nation, never mind that he revealed immense courage to step up to the spot when others were found wanting, and for that reason we are drawn to him even more. His hurt is our hurt, although you do not have to be admirers of the Netherlands' Clarence Seedorf nor the semi-finals' other fall-guy, the Frenchman Reynald Pedros, to feel for them as well.

Football is a team game and



Spot on: Alan Shearer celebrates avoiding the misery of missing during England's shoot-out against Germany on Wednesday night

Photograph: David Ashdown

it should not fall to one individual to bear the excruciating pain that was Southgate's lot at Wembley on Wednesday night. Terry Venables, who has lost a European Cup final as well as a European championship semi-final by this method, believes the time to look for alternatives has come. Two quarter-finals and two semi-finals decided this way in the past five days is four shoot-outs too many.

As the tie-breaking system becomes an accepted part of the

game, so the suspicion grows that teams, weighing up a technical or tactical disadvantage, might set out a defensive stall and play for penalties from the first whistle. In such a way does the contest itself become flawed as well.

If it has to be penalties then the entire team should be put on the spot. "Togetherness" has been a popular refrain these three weeks and at least that way the spectre of responsibility that will be the unfortunate Southgate's burden for

some time to come is more likely to be a shared one.

Better still, ditch this fair-ground nonsense once and for all. It might make for great television, it may well be gripping entertainment for the neutral, but as a means of deciding a football match, penalties remain thoroughly unsatisfactory particularly at a time when we are urging our players to become more professional and with the game embracing science to effect all-round improvement.

There is merit in some of the alternatives that were suggested in the aftermath of England's cruel defeat. One is to have a count-back on corners and shots that hit the woodwork to determine, a la boxing, the superior force.

True, it would provide an accurate reflection of the balance of play and ensure teams would at least go out for victory, although there remains something too cold and statistical about the method. That compels us to look elsewhere.

The best solution is one that combines the basic principles of the game with drama and excitement while retaining a sense of fair-play and justice. Withdrawing a player from each side at regular intervals would meet all those criteria while guaranteeing a result.

If the sides are still level after, say 20 minutes of extra-time - forget the "golden goal" because the evidence so far accrued suggests it only instilled more caution and persuaded officials against a controversial de-

cision that could prove conclusive - outfield players should be removed from each side one at a time at, say, five-minute intervals, thereby producing 10 v 10, nine v nine, etc until a goal is scored.

With space on the field increasing, there is no doubt a goal would arise, sooner rather than later, and before the surviving participants had run themselves into the ground. It is playing football to decide a football match and surely that is what we all want to see.

Jacquet has no regrets over team

Stephen Jessel reports from Paris on French reaction to their elimination

France reacted to shoot-out elimination from Euro 96 with a collective disappointed shrug of the shoulders and regretful acceptance that a team who had gone 27 matches without defeat and were tipped for victory had not done themselves justice.

No cars were burned along the Champs-Élysées and there were no reports of outbreaks of violence in provincial towns.

Newspapers could not resist front-page headlines referring to "Czech-mate" (a pun that actually works better in English than French) but pointed out that after four hours of normal play in the quarter and semi-finals without managing a goal - two hours each against the Netherlands and the Czech Republic - France had not established any great moral claim to the trophy.

"You didn't deserve to go to Wembley," the sports daily *L'Équipe*, said, asking French players "not to forget the lesson" as they look ahead to the 1998 World Cup which France is hosting.

L'Équipe said the coach, Aimé Jacquet, had laid the foundations for the World Cup by creating a solid defence, but criticised the team's lack of firepower. It also attacked the French playmaker Zinedine Zidane.

"He was dubbed a new Platini before Euro 96. He is at best a would-be Platini," it said.

Libération said: "The over-cautious French have only themselves to blame - they chose to wait and see and it proved a fatal choice."

France Soir commented: "The shadow of Eric Cantona hung over Old Trafford. Cantona was axed by Jacquet for fear that his overbearing personality may hamper France's solidarity. Cantona disturbs. He is a troublemaker, but he scores goals."

The papers also noted that it was at Old Trafford, home of the great philosopher, that France were eliminated.

Jacquet went on the defensive, saying the Championship had helped France take a "big step" forward. "I have absolutely no regrets," he said about his squad. "I had total conviction [about my selection], although afterwards one can say anything."

The rancid chauvinism of the English tabloids was not echoed here except on the lips of Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme right National Front, and his criticism was directed not at the team's opponents but at several of its players.

He complained that some of the squad either did not or could not sing the words of the Marseillaise and claimed that there were too few true Frenchmen in it, though in fact all but one were born in metropolitan France or its overseas territories.

euro-spy

EDITED BY RUPERT METCALF

England win something

It may not be much of a consolation, but England have won the Euro 96 Fair Play Trophy - and received fulsome praise from the tournament organisers.

Whatever happens in Sunday's final between Germany and the Czech Republic, England cannot be overlooked at the top of the Fair Play chart. Lennart Johansson, the president of Uefa, said: "I am pleased about this. It is no secret that I have always admired English football, its traditions and attitudes. During Euro 96, it has been like the good old days. It was not only football

coming home, I have felt at home too."

England will receive their trophy during the half-time interval at Wembley on Sunday. Terry Venables, the outgoing England coach, said: "It's not what I wanted, but it's better than nothing, isn't it?" The Dutch supporters, voted the winners of the Uefa 'crowd assessment' competition, will also be honoured.

England also won the Fifa Fair Play award at the 1990 World Cup in Italy - when they also lost in a semi-final to Germany after a penalty shoot-out.

The Fair Play points - assessed by Uefa delegates and based on the behaviour of players and supporters and their success "in abiding by the spirit as well as the laws of the game" - could have determined group placings, if teams had been otherwise equal.

EURO 96 FAIR PLAY STANDINGS: 1 England 8.23pts, 2 Denmark 6.19pts, 3 Spain 6.00pts, 4 Netherlands 5.26pts, 5 Romania 5.01pts, 6 France 4.66pts, 7 Scotland 4.62pts, 8 Turkey 4.50pts, 9 Germany 4.40pts, 10 Portugal 4.33pts, 11 Czech Republic 4.00pts, 12 Greece 3.66pts, 13 Czech Republic 3.66pts, 14 Slovakia 3.66pts, 15 Germany 3.66pts, 16 Croatia 3.33pts.

Petr Kouba, whose save from France's Reynald Pedros in the penalty shoot-out paved the way for Miroslav Kladec to fire his team from Old Trafford to Wembley, said: "The English fans will be very down about going out the way they did. But I hope they'll be back against the Germans. We'll be playing not only for the Czech Republic but for England as well."

Uhrin, in another public-relations gesture, wished aloud that his side were facing England. "But one of the best

The water is flowing
The trees are rustling
Just as beautifully, we beat the
Netherlands
Not even the famous Dutchmen
managed to win here
So we made it, we made it

The Czech Republic's song for Euro 96 may not be as infectious as "Football's Coming Home", but the last line of "We're Off to England!" summed up the mood of a delicious if disbelieving nation yesterday.

They made it - and in Prague, thousands celebrated an achievement which, like the lyric of "Vzhuru do Anglie!" in its translated form, defied rhyme or reason. Back at the Preston hotel that has been their home for three weeks, Dusan Uhrin's squad marked the occasion with the customary Czech beers and an appeal for English support in Sunday's final against Germany.

Petr Kouba, whose save from France's Reynald Pedros in the penalty shoot-out paved the way for Miroslav Kladec to fire his team from Old Trafford to Wembley, said: "The English fans will be very down about going out the way they did. But I hope they'll be back against the Germans. We'll be playing not only for the Czech Republic but for England as well."

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Czechs seek Wembley support

Phil Shaw finds the underdogs in buoyant mood for Sunday's final

teams in the tournament awaits us," he added. "I don't think they'll be any less strong than when they beat us at the start of the finals, even with a couple of suspensions."

Unlike Herti Vogts, and in contrast with his options before the goalless home with France, the Czech coach can select from strength. All four players suspended on Wednesday are likely to return, along with Patrik Berger, one of a quartet of Czechs who play in Germany's Bundesliga, despite the midfielder's continuing to feel unwell.

Vladimir Smicer, whose last-gasp goal against Russia prolonged the Czechs' stay in the competition, returned to Prague yesterday for his wedding. Sporting four stitches from a clash of heads with Lilian Thuram, he is due back tonight - with his bride.

She will be welcomed at their new base at St Albans, a fact which typifies the relaxed atmosphere surrounding the squad: shades of the Danish camp prior to their triumph at rank outsiders four years ago. It is now clear, however, that several opponents have mistaken Uhrin's liberal regime for weakness.

Because of their new status - the split with Slovakia

was formalised on New Year's Day, 1993 - there was a glib tendency to bracket them with the likes of Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Belarus and Lithuania. In fact, despite being a relatively small country of 10.5 million people, the Czech Republic has a rich footballing tradition, which Kouba, Kladec and the rest were already upholding before reaching Lancashire.

The former Czechoslovakia reached the final of the World Cup, European Championship and Olympic Games. The new republic were too strong, as the song gleefully points out, for Norway and the Netherlands in qualifying (although this time last year, they were in disarray after losing 1-0 to group makeweights Luxembourg). And Slavia Prague put out Italian opposition on their way to the Uefa Cup semi-finals this year.

Uhrin, a ruddy-faced 33-year-old who never played top-flight football, has proved a master of marshalling his resources and playing to the strengths of his players. While no one would claim the Czechs as one of the more attractive sides at Euro 96, they have shown themselves a tactically astute unit capable of turning deep defence into swift counter-attack.

Perhaps their defensive inclination stems from a national siege mentality: Czechoslovakia had more than its share of being invaded and occupied. The Westernisation that followed 1989's "Velvet Revolution" - which affected every aspect of Czech culture - is not hard to detect either, though, in the flamboyance of Berger and Karel Poborsky.

President Václav Havel, the dissident playwright and Frank Zappa devotee who led the break with Communist orthodoxy, said in a message to the squad: "Somehow the word 'congratulations' seems too weak. We all had our fingers crossed against France and we believe in you for the final. Mind you, I feared Karel Poborsky was going to try and chip his penalty like his winning goal against Portugal."

Czechoslovakia were the last team to beat the Germans on penalties in a competitive fixture, winning the shoot-out 5-3 in the final of 20 years ago. What irony: after all the talk of 1966 revisited, we have a reprise of '76. With the Sex Pistols playing in London again, and the tube drivers and postmen on strike, we should have seen it coming. Whether the Czech Republic can complete the coincidence must still be doubtful. But they made it, they certainly made it.

The rancid chauvinism of the English tabloids was not echoed here except on the lips of Jean-Marie Le Pen, leader of the extreme right National Front, and his criticism was directed not at the team's opponents but at several of its players.

He complained that some of the squad either did not or could not sing the words of the Marseillaise and claimed that there were too few true Frenchmen in it, though in fact all but one were born in metropolitan France or its overseas territories.

Klinsmann has praise for Venables and his side

Jürgen Klinsmann, the German captain, yesterday urged followers of English football to realise the debt it owes Terry Venables and forecast an even brighter beginning under Glenn Hoddle. The injured former Tottenham striker was as anxious as any Wembley spectator during the tension of Wednesday's Euro 96 semi-final.

While the 31-year-old was delighted that Germany had emerged triumphant from a night which swayed this way and then that in tantalising and mesmerising fashion, he was quick to pay tribute to Venables.

"They have played wonderful attacking football, and it was

just so very close. England were very organised and looked like a top side, with everybody running his backside off. That shows just how good a job Terry Venables has done for English football. He's now left Glenn a team which looks like one of the strongest in the world."

"They've proved that by their performances in the tournament. Terry can be really proud of the job he has done over the past two-and-a-half years with his lads."

Klinsmann walked away from Wembley clutching the shirt of his former Spurs team-mate, Teddy Sheringham, and was

confident in his assertion that his personal respect for the English game would be shared across the Continent.

"I certainly wasn't surprised that England could play so well because they proved it during the tournament. They proved it six years ago in Italy, it was just as close then, and when it goes to penalties you need that little bit of luck. We had it and that's all it takes."

Despite his unwanted spectating role, Klinsmann admitted he was still trying to catch his breath from a night which - at least inside the stadium - demonstrated everything that is best about the English game.

"It was an incredible game, a game that didn't deserve a winner and a loser," he said. "It was so close and far away the most dramatic one in the Championship. Extra time was just unbelievable, it was so tense, so exciting. And it just went on as well, up and down, up and down, all the time. The atmosphere was incredible, too."

"The lads had never experienced anything like that in their careers and there's no doubt it's a game everybody will still be talking about in 10 or 20 years. It was so dramatic."

Germany, however, are in the final, although with their resources stretched. Three play-

ers - Jürgen Kohler, Mario Basler and Fredi Bobic - have already gone home injured, while two of their penalty takers, Stefan Reuter and Andreas Möller, are ruled out after receiving their second yellow cards. Steffen Freund, Thomas Helmer and Christian Ziege sustained knocks against England which could put their participation in doubt, and if Klinsmann's calf injury does not heal, they could be down to a bare minimum of outfield players. The skipper said: "I still have a hope, even if it's not a big one. The doctors have been clear to me [that I cannot play] but I still believe I can get fit."

Bamber Bridge joy

One Lancashire non-League club are pleased that the Czech Republic have reached the final of Euro 96, having formed a bond with the eastern Europeans before the tournament.

In their last warm-up friendly, the Czechs enjoyed a 4-1 win over Bamber Bridge, the champions of the United League, whose players and supporters have followed the Czechs' fortunes ever since. "We are delighted they have got through to the final - but it's such a pity they won't be playing England," the Bamber Bridge secretary, Dave Spencer, said. "We might get half a dozen tickets to Wembley now!"

EURO 96 XI			
Chosen from the semi-finals			
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER
GOALKEEPER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER	DEFENDER

Viollet wilts under Hingis' onslaught

GUY HODGSON

Noel Coward would have written a song about it along the lines of bad slogs and English women, and it required a special kind of optimism for Rachel Viöllet to draw encouragement at Wimbledon yesterday.

Out in midday sun she definitely wilted, collapsing 6-1, 6-1 in 40 minutes to Martina Hingis, which was hardly the ideal way to celebrate becoming British No 1 for the first time. But was she down-hearted to be losing to a child? Would Wimbledon welcome a player in a fluorescent lime shirt?

"She's got a lot of shots," Viöllet said with a accent more Manchester than her native Manchester, "but I'd love to play her again because I feel I've learned a lot. It gives me an indication of what it takes to get to the next level. I feel ready."

Which is more than she had appeared on court. The two players had one thing in common in that they are named after a sports personality - Hingis after Martina Navratilova, Viöllet after her former Manchester United playing father Dennis - but that apart they were not on the same planet, never mind within the same trammels.

Hingis is possibly unique in that her seeding of 16 is greater than her age, 15, yet if it was a woman against a girl out there it was the younger player who was holding the whip hand. She had so much command she even began experimenting with her tactics as the match wore on, advancing to the net to "try something".

What she did not try, however, was Viöllet's service which is an extraordinarily complicated action that reminds you of someone trying to wash their back with a loofah. This contortion is the result of a shoulder injury which required two operations and a two-year lay-off that halted the 24-year-old's career physically if not mentally.

"It helped me," she said. "It



Put to the sword: Chris Wilkinson serves during his five-set defeat to Jan Krosiak at Wimbledon yesterday

Photograph: David Ashdown

made me realise how much I loved tennis. My desire to play was even greater after I had the operations. The serve is simple and it keeps pressure off my shoulder."

There have been occasions when Steffi Graf has had to search deep inside herself to find out if she still loved the game. At 20 she said she expected to be off the court at 28 although she has withdrawn that estimate as

that retirement date draws near (next June) and the prospect of a 20th Grand Slam title is a big incentive.

Particularly with the principal barrier to a seventh Wimbledon title, Monica Seles, removed from her path. Yesterday, on the same No 1 Court that had proved to be the second seed's graveyard, Graf laboured at first against Italy's Nathalie Baudone, ranked 122

in the world, but eventually prevailed 7-5, 6-3.

Graf, who admits to being short of practice due to a knee injury, started sluggishly and it was only when she came to terms with her opponent's serve into her body on the backhand side that she assumed command. Her drop shots were particularly effective.

Four set and numerous break points were squandered by the

German champion before she took the first set by forcing and error from Baudone's backhand with a forehand drive. The second set was hardly a formality either but she served out to 15 to win in 67 minutes. Two matches played poorly, two wins; the top seed is looking ominous.

Two potential problems for Graf were nullified yesterday when the eighth seed, Lindsay Davenport, was beaten 6-3,

6-2 by Larissa Neiland and Magdalena Maleeva, the 10th, was ousted by Nathalie Tauziat, a quarter-finalist at Wimbledon in 1992 and a winner at Eastbourne last year, 7-6, 3-6, 9-7.

Davenport lasted 59 minutes although Neiland had established a supremacy relatively early by taking a 4-0 first set lead. There was a symmetry about the end of each set, an ace from the Latvian settling it.

Pierce plays vamp, funny onion and some tennis

RICHARD EDMONDSON

You get more than a game of tennis from Mary Pierce. You get a performance.

In tennis's land of the bland, Pierce is the darling of those who crave easy headlines. She does her best for them before, during and after matches.

An example of the final category came after Pierce was booted out of court at this year's French Open and then delivered this telling analysis of her on-court fortunes: "Shtit happens," she said.

That was the tournament in

which Pierce supplanted Liz Hurley as the sexiest of "that dress", a little black number she threw on and almost missed. Expectation was high then when the 21-year-old had an appointment yesterday on Court Four with Britain's Claire Taylor.

With all the great divas, Pierce kept her crowd waiting, but this seemed a small price to pay when tennis's version of the negligee was about to be produced. The unveiling, though, was desperately disappointing. Pierce revealing a simple white top with blue trimmings which, with the addition of a lapel watch and thermometer in the pocket, would have gained her em-

ployment at the local infirmary. The No 13 seed had brought a home-brew along in a plastic bottle, a liquid which appeared to resemble antifreeze. This was popped into the ice cooler where, strangely, it remained until the match was over. By that time there had been plenty of pure Pierce.

From the outset she was an aloof and detached figure, the sort of person some refer to as a funny onion. She slunk around the court in the manner of those women who get paid a lot for not eating. There were also touches of the vamp as she carried herself like the character in the advert who used to

emerge from a wardrobe with Hai Karate in her hand.

The circuit's drama queen deals in the sort of overt expressionism that you see elsewhere only in silent movies, the black and white films in which facial contortions are the only way of getting the emotional message across. Pierce insists this image is neither put-on nor welcome. Whenever she sees herself on television she is riding urge to be put a racket through the screen.

The Frenchwoman's power game is based on the precision of the tightrope, with the same disastrous consequences when things go wrong. She has

been plopped into the net on several occasions this year as her Australian Open success last season becomes an ever more distant memory, and there was inconsistency again yesterday. Pierce enjoys backgammon and board games, which presumably fully drains her well of strategy as, on court, her policy wears little from just giving the ball an old fashioned thump.

For a while yesterday this was not enough. At 2-3 down Pierce identified a problem of excess baggage and removed a chunk of blue bubblegum from her mouth. At 3-4 down she stuck a finger down her throat, either

a commentary on her own game or the porting of the crowd. But that was as far as Taylor got. Given the list named as her favourite in the players' manual it was apt that the match turned into four games and a funeral, the 21-year-old from Banbury collecting just two of the last 11 games in a 6-4, 6-2 defeat.

Larissa Pierce would have expected to win more easily than this, especially as the scoreline did not flatter Taylor, ranked 11th in Britain and 340 in the world. Pierce, though, survived and faces Natalia Medvedeva on her next day at the studio.

Martinez on margin

She is a former champion, congratulated by her king and fêted by her compatriots but she still cannot fill the Centre Court at Wimbledon. The Spaniard Conchita Martinez, the third-ranked woman player in the world, somehow has not got what it takes to attract the crowds.

During Martinez's second-round defeat of the American Lisa Raymond yesterday, scores of seats remained empty as spectators looked elsewhere for entertainment or headed for a reviving cup of tea.

Perhaps they had not forgiven the 24-year-old Martinez for beating Martina Navratilova, the sentimental favourite who was playing her last Wimbledon

singles match, in the 1994 final. Or perhaps they just found her style a touch tedious.

Last year Martinez complained that Wimbledon officials were failing to recognise her status as the reigning champion by scheduling her games too often outside courts. Her heavy-lidded baseline game, honed on red clay, does not, however, set the pulse racing like Navratilova's attacking volleys or Steffi Graf's athletic prowess.

Spectators fidgeted yesterday as she prepared, slowly and deliberately, for each serve. They clapped politely as she passed the outplayed Raymond with her thumping forehand and they looked forward expectantly to the next match.

Court circular

Father figure for Ivanisevic

Most millionaire players on the circuit rely on a phalanx of trainers, masseurs and minders, but Goran Ivanisevic, the No 4 seed, prefers to go for spiritual sustenance and has brought along his own priest.

The towering Croat left-hander is praying this will be his third time lucky in a Wimbledon final but confessed to having trouble when talking to Father Josip - he has to remember not to swear.

The booming server, once known as Goran the Grouch, has tamed his demons on and off the court. Having Father Josip along at Wimbledon has helped give the superstitious 24-year-old a sense of proportion.

"I am calmer than before," he said. "It makes me focus on the match. The priest, you can talk to him about whatever you want but you cannot swear, you know, and it's tough. I have to concentrate when I talk to him," he said.

"When I am home, I go to church every Sunday. I believe in that religion. It is nice to believe in something."

Ivanisevic, who lost to Andre Agassi in the 1992 final and fell at the last hurdle against Pete Sampras in 1994, is hoping for some help from on high this time. "I have prayed a lot of times but it didn't happen yet so I probably did something bad, you know, outside the church."

Thousands stayed away from Wimbledon yesterday evening to watch England come within a heartbeat of European glory. Official attendance figures were nearly 4,000 down compared to the first Wednesday last year. Crowds thinned out early in the evening, leaving gaps in the audience on Centre Court, and strawberry-and-cream kiosks were practically deserted as tennis fans joined the great rush home in time for the 7.30 kick-off. So far, crowds have topped 100,000 in the first three days.



The pain of defeat: Britain's Mark Petchey suffers against Cedric Pioline yesterday

Photograph: Fiona Hanson/PA

Henman caught on video

In addition to a place in the last 32 at Wimbledon Britain's No 1, Tim Henman, will be receiving a present from the All-England Club - a videotape of his matches against Danny Sapsford and Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Wimbledon have decreed that all players involved in singles matches on Centre Court or No 1 Court will receive a videotape of the game as one of their competition perks.

Along with the video and guaranteed prize-money of £15,900 even if he loses, Henman and his fellow competitors get a range of free services while involved in the tournament. Two free tickets to a top West End show are on offer to all players, along with free passes for matches, free transportation and social events including Saturday's LTA Ball and a cocktail party on 5 July.

Competitors also get a £14.50 daily allowance for meals. "The video is extremely popular with the players and we intend to continue it," said a club spokesman. This year's copy could be a collector's item as No 1 Court is being demolished to make way for a new one near the practice courts at Aorangi Park.

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS FROM WIMBLEDON

Men's singles
Holder: P. Sampras (US)
First round
R. NALBANDIAN (Ned) bt D. Rostagno (US) 6-4, 6-3, 6-3
J. STENBERG (AUS) bt J. Novak (Cz Rep) 7-6, 6-4, 6-3
M. ROSETH (Swe) bt A. Onofrey (Rus) 6-3, 7-6, 6-4
P. RAFFER (Aus) bt G. Pizzini (It) 6-1, 7-5, 6-4
S. ANJERVIC (Croat) bt P. Bouzayev (Fr) 7-5, 6-4, 6-4
J. NEALAND (Ned) bt C. Wilander (Swe) 1-6, 7-5, 6-4
A. VOLKOV (Rus) bt M. Damm (Cz Rep) 7-6, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4
C. PIOLINE (Fr) bt M. Petchey (GB) 6-1, 6-4, 6-2
P. SAMPRAS (US) bt M. Philippoussis (Aus) 7-6, 6-4, 6-4
S. STEIN (US) bt G. Rusedski (GB) 7-6, 4-6, 7-6, 6-2
K. NIKOLIC (Slovenia) bt B. Black (Zim) 4-6, 6-1, 7-6, 6-3
T. HENMAN (GB) bt D. Sapsford (GB) 6-1, 6-7, 6-3
M. NAGATANI (Jpn) bt A. Costa (Spa) 4-6, 7-6, 3-6, 7-5, 6-1
J. HINGIS (Swe) bt A. Correggi (Spa) 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4
S. STOLTE (Aus) bt M. Lonsdale (GB) 6-2, 1-6, 7-6, 6-4

Men's doubles
Holder: T. Woodbridge and M. Woodhouse (Aus)
First round
M. Dost and S. Schalen (Ned) bt S. E. Davis (US) and P. Hickory (Aus) 6-3, 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 6-4
J. Gash and R. Rensberg (US) bt A. Nollan and 7-5, 6-3, 6-4
M. GOSLINGER (Ger) and Y. KAFELNIKOV (Rus) bt B. Batters and M. Lonsdale (GB) 6-4, 6-7, 7-6, 6-7
T. A. WOODBRIDGE (Aus) and M. WOODHOUSE (Aus) bt K. Krasovec (Cz Rep) and D. Rostagno (US) 6-4, 6-3, 6-1
M. NOLAN (AUS) and D. NESTOR (CAN) bt N. Broad (GB) and P. Norval (SA) 4-6, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4
J. PALMER and J. STARK (US) bt J. Stenberg (AUS) and D. Vacek (CZ) 6-3, 6-4, 6-1, 7-6, 6-2
T. HENNING and T. WILSON (Ned) bt J. E. LINGH and P. HARRIS (Ned) 6-4, 6-4, 6-1
D. NARGISO (It) and M. PARRA (Arg) bt M. Damm (Cz Rep) and P. Hyborg (Swe) 6-4, 6-4, 6-3
J. BATES and C. WILSON (GB) bt J. Delgado and S. Lathrop (US) 6-3, 7-5, 6-0
T. CARBONELL and F. Rola (Spa) bt W. Arthur and A. Krasovec (CZ) 6-3, 5-7, 6-7, 7-6, 6-2
M. PHILIPPOUSSIS and P. RAFFER (Aus) bt K. Pech and D. Wheaton (US) 7-6, 7-5, 7-6

Women's singles
Holder: S. Graf (Ger)
First round
M. HINGIS (Swe) bt R. Viöllet (GB) 6-1, 6-1, 6-1
L. NEALAND (Ned) bt L. DAVENPORT (US) 6-3, 6-2
N. MEDVEDOVA (Rus) bt R. Hink (Jpn) 6-3, 6-2
J. NOVOTNA (Cz Rep) bt L. Courtois (Bel) 7-6, 6-3
L. MOHRE (US) bt K. Po (US) 4-6, 6-0, 6-3
N. ANJERVIC (Croat) bt C. Panik (Ger) 2-6, 6-2, 6-3
R. DAVENPORT (US) and M. J. FERNANDEZ (US) bt R. De Lora (CZ) and N. J. Post (AUS) 6-3, 6-2
S. APPENDINE-BALLERIE and S. TESTUD (Fr) bt R. De Lora (CZ) and N. J. Post (AUS) 6-3, 6-2
D. LARISA NEILAND (Lat) and M. J. FERNANDEZ (US) bt R. De Lora (CZ) and N. J. Post (AUS) 6-3, 6-2
J. NOVOTNA (CZ Rep) and A. SANCHES VICARIO (Spa) bt A. Frazier (US) and K. Po (US) 4-6, 6-2, 6-1
Mixed doubles
Holder: J. Stark and M. Novotna (US)
First round
P. Com (Aus) and M. Pech (Fr) bt L. P. M. H. (GB) and K. M. Adams (US) 6-4, 6-3
S. Draper and E. Smylie (AUS) bt L. Post (AUS) and K. Nagatani (Jpn) 6-4, 6-4
Seeded players in CAPITALS

Women's doubles
Holder: J. Stark and M. Novotna (US)
First round
P. Com (Aus) and M. Pech (Fr) bt L. P. M. H. (GB) and K. M. Adams (US) 6-4, 6-3
S. Draper and E. Smylie (AUS) bt L. Post (AUS) and K. Nagatani (Jpn) 6-4, 6-4
Seeded players in CAPITALS

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Dutch joy in jump-off
Equestrianism
Piet Reymakers threw caution to the wind yesterday, when he flew round the jump-off course to win the Pulsar Prize on the third day of the Aachen Nations Cup Show, writes Genevieve Murphy from Aachen.
His mount was Jewel's Amethyst, one of the best horses he has ridden since Ratina with whom he was individual silver medalist at the 1992 Olympics.
The Dutchman defeated Ludger Beerbaum (the Olympic champion and Ratina's current rider) who had set him a serious challenge on Sprehe Gaylord but was not greatly surprised to see it being beaten.
Ronnie Massarella, the British manager, took time to decide on his quarter for today's Nations Cup between 12 countries. He has provisionally included Nick Skelton and Dollar Girl, who had spooked at a triple bar over a water ditch in yesterday's Pulsar contest before crashing through.

Baseball
AMERICAN LEAGUE: New York Yankees 2, Minnesota Twins 1; Boston 6, Cleveland 4 (15); Toronto 6, Seattle 5; Kansas City 7, Milwaukee 5; Texas Rangers 4, Chicago Cubs 3; Los Angeles 4, Houston 2; San Diego 3.
NATIONAL LEAGUE: Florida 3, San Francisco 2; New York Mets 9, Colorado 5; Cincinnati 4, Philadelphia 2; Pittsburgh 3, Montreal 1; St. Louis 11, Arizona 7; Chicago White Sox 6, Los Angeles 4; Houston 4, San Diego 3.
CENTRAL DIVISION: Cleveland 42, Chicago 38, Detroit 37, Kansas City 36, Minnesota 35, St. Louis 34, Texas 33, Toronto 32.
EASTERN DIVISION: New York Yankees 45, Boston 44, Toronto 43, Baltimore 42, Oakland 41, Detroit 40, Cleveland 39, Chicago 38, Philadelphia 37, Pittsburgh 36, St. Louis 35, Milwaukee 34, Kansas City 33, Houston 32, San Diego 31, Los Angeles 30, Seattle 29, San Francisco 28, Arizona 27, Colorado 26, Florida 25, Atlanta 24, Washington 23, Montreal 22, Cincinnati 21, Pittsburgh 20, Philadelphia 19, New York Mets 18, San Francisco 17, Los Angeles 16, Houston 15, San Diego 14, Colorado 13, Milwaukee 12, Chicago White Sox 11, Arizona 10, Texas Rangers 9, Kansas City 8, Minnesota 7, Detroit 6, Cleveland 5, St. Louis 4, Baltimore 3, New York Yankees 2, Boston 1, Toronto 0, Philadelphia 0, Pittsburgh 0, Cincinnati 0, Montreal 0, Florida 0, Atlanta 0, Washington 0, Arizona 0, Colorado 0, Milwaukee 0, Chicago White Sox 0, San Francisco 0, Los Angeles 0, Houston 0, San Diego 0, Seattle 0, San Francisco 0, Arizona 0, Colorado 0, Milwaukee 0, Chicago White Sox 0, New York Yankees 0, Boston 0, Toronto 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SPORT



'Luck deserted England on the night but in defeat they showed how much progress they had made.' **KEN JONES** on Terry Venables' reign

Page 26

Venables makes dignified departure

GLENN MOORE

Football Correspondent



Late on Wednesday night Terry Venables walked across the Wembley turf for the last time as England coach. As he moved towards the tunnel under the royal box, two policemen, from a gathering of about 50 officers, stopped him to ask for his autograph. He signed, paused for a joke or two, and prepared to go inside. As he did so, the police broke into a spontaneous round of applause.

It was a measure of what Venables has achieved. Not all of those officers will have been football fans but all recognised that he had produced a team which had put some pride back into the country, which had created a Wembley atmosphere unmatched in the memory of many people there.

Venables was still putting a brave face on defeat when he faced the press for the last time at Bisham Abbey yesterday. Some of the men in front of him had impugned his ability, some had doubted his honesty, a few had viciously attacked his character. Yet there were no recriminations, no "I told you so", just a sense of pride tempered with disappointment. He did not need to say anything, his players had done the talking for him.

In the two and a half years since his appointment, Venables has restored England to a position of respect in the international game. He has done so without recourse to short-term, quick-fix solutions but by changing the style of the national side, incorporating the best of British and Continental football.

It was a bold policy. Members

of his own staff doubted whether he had the time, or the resources, to create an England team which could play the international numbers game.

Three-at-the-back defenders stepping into midfield, split-strikers - Venables took the jargon of contemporary football and turned it into a flesh-and-bones achievement. His players, and the public, have been educated in the demands of the modern game.

So why is he not staying to complete the job? It was clear long before the Football Association appointed Glenn Hoddle as his successor that Venables was the best coach around. Yet forces within the FA still refused to offer him a contract to 1998 (a ridiculous one-year deal was vouchered). Maybe they know something the public are yet to be told. If not they were spiteful and foolish.

Southgate is part of the rich legacy Venables leaves to Hoddle. An intelligent, versatile player he epitomises the type of footballer Venables has sought. A strong character and a personable man he should recover from Wednesday's ordeal to be an England player for years to come.

So should several others bloodied by Venables. Young men like the Neville brothers, Gary and Phil, Robbie Fowler, Nick Barmby, Darren Anderson, Graeme Le Saux, Steve

McManaman and Jamie Redknapp will be at the heart of Hoddle's plans. "He has a good nucleus of players but I don't want to start saying 'he's got great players... etc' it will be hard enough for him anyway," Venables said. "What he does have is players who possess that good feeling of knowing they can equal the best. There was a time when, if we played Germany or the Netherlands, we would be thinking 'how many will they beat us by?' Now we are expecting to beat them, which is good."

Hoddle's first match is a tricky one, away to Moldova on 1 September. He becomes the sixth England manager since Sir Alf Ramsey. The fourth of those, Graham Taylor, claimed it was "an impossible job". "It's not impossible," Venables said, "just very difficult."

Venables has won nothing - apart from the Fair Play Award - another parallel to 1990. Yet his achievements have been considerable. In the seven months before he took over England had failed to qualify for the World Cup, had been beaten by the United States, and conceded a goal in seconds to



Goodbye to all that: Terry Venables drives out of Bisham Abbey yesterday and leaves the job of England coach behind him

Photograph: Robert Hallam

mitted he has missed the day-to-day involvement of club management. Being technical director would not give him any chance at all to do the things he relishes most, improving individual players and building a team.

The next move may be abroad. Porto, still searching for a replacement for Bobby Robson, have been suggested though the big clubs in Italy and Spain will be keeping a watchful eye. "I've nothing up my sleeve," he said yesterday, "just the ambition to take a holiday". Before going to Bisham, he

had said an emotional farewell to his players. Offered the chance to go home after the penalty shoot-out, the entire squad had opted to return to the team hotel for one last night together. They stayed up, discussing the game and the tournament, into the early hours.

Particular attention was paid to the unfortunate Gareth Southgate, the man who missed the fateful penalty. "He wanted to take it, he will be the better for the experience," Venables said. "We all felt for him. We came in on collective

responsibility and we will go out on it."

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San Marino. They were a joke, at home and abroad.

Under Venables they have come within the width of a post from the European Championship final and played football which stretched the Germans and bewildered the Dutch. England are no longer derided as an international anachronism, still living in the world of "kick-and-rush", they are respected as a strong and sophisticated side.

The seed has been planted for a team to win the next World Cup. It is up to Hoddle to nurture it.

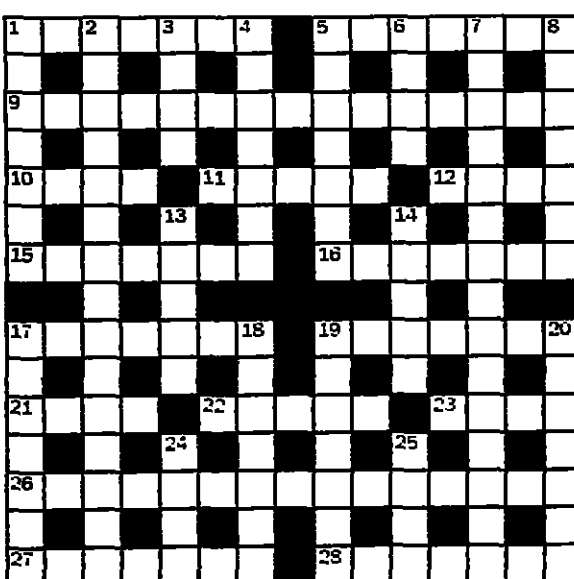
THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD



No. 3025, Friday 28 June

By Sparrow

Thursday's Solution



ACROSS
1 Filmmaker mostly missed up and put in wrong drawers? (7)
5 Opportunity to meet lecturer in eastern church construction (7)
9 Folks who are relatively energetic? (7, 8)
10 Managed with Dutch currency in Bloemfontein (4)
11 Punished Scottish lawyer conceding joint (5)
12 Jason, for instance, man bringing back gold? (4)
15 Embargo on sporting event covered by agreement between major powers? (4, 3)
16 Innocence I've regarded as innate? (7)

DOWN
1 Area encompassed by new tower (7)
2 To get girl after complaint must be good (8, 7)
3 Horned creature seen in same place earlier (4)
4 Ceramic skill possessed by European female (7)
5 Best attachment given confidence crossing slope (7)
6 Identification needed to close account, sharpish (4)
7 Orientals making moves to attack king? It's just a game (7, 8)
8 Being flexible, smiles indulgently about circular letter (7)
9 Discount making a club lead to East (5)
10 Central fund established by communications firm in Kentucky (5)
11 Naval officer, hopelessly dim, plunged into sea (7)
12 Bit of dirt caught in shoe (7)
13 Rosemary's baby's starting to appear beneath a cloud of smoke (7)
14 Start to test motive for crime (7)
15 Pupil's almost certain about mark on score sheet (4)
16 Shock as paper pillars right-wing character in Cabinet (4)

THE FRANKLIN SCRAMBLE Make the longest word you can from JOURNALS Thursday's Scramble: RICHARD

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Henman and Milligan left to fly the flag

JOHN ROBERTS
Tennis Correspondent



As Mr Venables said in another arena, we must accentuate the positive. Britain has two men in the third round, and since Tim Henman and Luke Milligan are playing each other today, the nation will be represented in the last 16 for the fifth year consecutively.

The five other hopefuls, including Greg Rusedski, who carried the flag (tied round his head) last year, perished in the second round, but we have been taught not to be greedy. Celebrate, instead, the fact that Henman versus Milligan marks the first occasion in the Open era that two British men will have played each other in the third round.

Step back in amazement on learning that it will be the first time two British men will have met on the Centre Court since Monday 20 June, 1938, when Bunny Austin defeated Eric Filby and went on to become the last British finalist in the men's singles.

Rusedski, on Court No 14, served 30 aces but was eliminated by Brett Steven, who had also beaten him in their two previous meetings, on hard courts. On this occasion, the New Zealander won, 7-6, 4-6, 7-6, 6-2. Rusedski almost double-faulted himself to distraction in the third-set tie-break, which he lost, 12-14.

Mark Petchey was no match for Cedric Pichine, the No 16 seed, but he was at least given the opportunity to pay his respects to No 1 Court. The Frenchman won, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2, which surprised no one who recalled his stupendous quarter-final against Boris Becker last year, which he lost, 9-7 in the fifth set.

YESTERDAY AT WIMBLEDON

- Davenport makes departure in the graveyard of seeds
- Henman digs deep to triumph in battle of the Brits
- Graf labours before bowling over Baudone in 67 minutes

Chris Wilkinson seemed likely to create something of a national record for consistency by advancing the third round four years in a row, but he was unable to build on a bright start against Jan Krosak, of Slovakia. Krosak recovered from a set and a break down to prevail, 1-6, 7-5, 5-7, 6-4, 6-3.

Since Colin Beecher had fallen to Italy's Renzo Furlan the day before, that left Danny Sapsford, who could only have prospered at Henman's expense. The 27-year-old from Surrey merely detained the nation's top man on Court No 1. Their match had been suspended on Wednesday because of bad light, with Henman leading, 6-1, 5-5. When play resumed, Sapsford was quicker into his stride, winning a second set tie-break, 7-3, and treating spectators to a superb job on the final point.

That was about it for our Danny. Henman won the next 11 games before Sapsford produced his first two aces of the match to briefly interrupt his opponent. Henman won, 6-1, 6-7, 6-0, 6-1, requiring only 55 minutes on the day.

This was fortunate, considering that Henman had not had a day off since commencing

the tournament on Tuesday with that spectacular five-set triumph against Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov, the French Open champion and fifth seed.

No peace for the successful. Henman is due back on court today to face Milligan, who needed all the rest he could get yesterday after almost collapsing from cramp during his marathon match against Nicolas Lapenthi, of Ecuador, on Wednesday.

"I would have preferred a day off," Henman said, "but I've just got to get on with it. It does seem peculiar that some players in the draw are playing Monday, Thursday, and I seem to be spending all my time on the court. It's not really what you would expect in a Grand Slam. I'm not happy, but maybe it's something they should look at."

Overworked or not, it will be a proud moment for the 21-year-old from Oxford and his family when he steps on to the Centre Court this afternoon. His grandfather, Henry Billington, reached the third round on three occasions, 1948, 1950 and 1951.

Setting aside national fervour for a moment, it ought to be mentioned that some of our overseas visitors also made good use of their court time yesterday.



Pete Sampras in action yesterday

Photograph: AFP

terday. Pete Sampras, who is attempting to win the title four times consecutively, demonstrated to a mighty young Australian, Mark Philippoussis, that there is much more to grass-court tennis than hitting big serves.

The 19-year-old Philippoussis almost blew Sampras off the rubberised concrete court when they met in the third round of the Australian Open in January, and hit 28 aces on the Centre Court yesterday, 20 of them by the seventh game of the second set.

Moreover, he hit the fastest recorded serve of the tournament (131 mph), and a second serve of 126 mph. But Sampras still won handily, 7-6, 6-4, 6-4, which prompted Philippoussis to observe, "I think Pete was definitely determined for revenge, to let everyone know that maybe the last time I beat him it was a bit of a fluke or something."

Setting aside national fervour for a moment, it ought to be mentioned that some of our overseas visitors also made good use of their court time yesterday.

That was no fluke, but Sampras has learned from a dodgy introduction to the laws that the return of serve is the key to success, and the lesson appears to be sinking in early for the big Aussie - one Greek's gift to another.

"I think aces means nothing," Philippoussis said. "I would prefer to serve no aces and win the match than serve 500 aces and lose the match. I think you're better to get consistency in the first serve than aces. First serves and first volleys and the returns are more important than smacking away on my serve. I'm still young, and I'm sure I'll learn that as I get on."

He is being helped in this direction by Tony Roche, Australia's Davis Cup coach, who spent years trying to win Ivan Lendl to a Wimbledon title. "Tony said I have to mature more and really learn to play grass-court tennis," Philippoussis said. "At the moment I'm serving big, but I've got to learn how to play the points and the returns, and things like that."

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